

ARCTURUS.

No. II.

NEWSPAPERS.

NO one, it has been said, ever takes up a newspaper without interest, or lays it down without regret. There is a deeper truth in this observation than at first thought strikes the mind; it is not the casual disappointment at the loss of fine writing, or the absence of particular topics of news, or the variety of subjects that dispel all deep-settled reflection; but a newspaper is in some measure a picture of human life and we can no more read its various paragraphs with pleasure, than we can look back upon the events of any single day with unmixed satisfaction. The circumstances we read of on the page relate to others, but somehow we feel that they are part of ourselves; there is a sense of incompleteness in the broken contents, a consciousness of to-morrow's labor and toil when the journal will again appear with the same list of hopes, fears, stereotype jokes that always beget dissatisfaction, because they rob us of a little anticipated pleasure, and habitual record of accidents. A man may learn, sitting by his fireside, more than an angel would desire to know of human life, by reading well a single newspaper. It is an instrument of many tones, running through the whole scale of humanity; from the lightest gayety to the gravest sadness; from the large interests of nations to the humblest affairs of the smallest individual. On its single page we read of Births, Marriages, and Deaths; the daily, almost hourly, register of royalty, how it eat, walked, and laughed; and the single

incident the world deems worth recording of the life of poverty—how it died. It is a picture of motley human life; a poet's thought, or an orator's eloquence in one column, and the condemnation of a pickpocket in another. The scenes cross each other like the humorous, satirical associations of the Beggar's Opera, where in the same breath we have the sentiments of fine fashionable lords and ladies, and the inventory of Nimming Ned's rogueries—‘a damask window-curtain, a hoop petticoat, a pair of silver candlesticks, a periwig, and one silk stocking from the fire that happened last night.’ It is the ‘abstract and brief chronicle of the time,’ in a truer sense than ever the players were; a daguerreotype impression of the acts and thoughts of a city, more or less complete for one day; a page written out of the great epic poem of life. It has its graver and lighter incidents; we may extract from it matter for mirth, or indignation, or fear, or hope.

What is it but a map of busy life,
Its fluctuations and its vast concerns ?
Here runs the mountainous and craggy ridge
That tempts ambition. On the summit, see,
The seals of office glitter in his eyes ;
He climbs, he pants, he grasps them. At his heels,
Close at his heels a demagogue ascends,
And with a dexterous jerk soon twists him down,
And wins them, but to lose them in his turn.
Here rills of oily eloquence, in soft
Meanders, lubricate the course they take ;
The modest speaker is ashamed and grieved
To engross a moment's notice, and yet begs,
Begs a propitious ear for his poor thoughts,
However trivial all that he conceives.
Sweet bashfulness ! it claims, at least, this praise,
The dearth of information and good sense
That it foretells us, always comes to pass.
Cataracts of declamation thunder here,
There forests of no-meaning spread the page
In which all comprehension wanders lost ;
While fields of pleasantry amuse us there,
With merry descants on a nation's woes.
The rest appears a wilderness of strange
But gay confusion, roses for the cheeks
And lilies for the brows of faded age,
Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald,
Heaven, earth, and ocean plunder'd of their sweets,
Nectareous essences, Olympian dews,
Sermons and city feasts, and favorite airs,

Æthereal journeys, submarine exploits,
And Katterfelto, with his hair on end
At his own wonders, wondering for his bread.

THE TASK, Bk. iv.

How could the world have gone on so long without the various interests of the newspaper for all taste and classes. Life must have hung very loosely together when its various discussions depended upon the chance meeting of neighbors, and truth was subject to all the inextricable dilemmas of weak minds in personal argument. Dr. Peters, in his new Eclectic Journal, traces the first critical review—so he dignifies a kind of author's catalogue of books—to the ninth century. How was opinion promulgated in the world before that time? had the authors' runners to go about, and circulate their reputation? Doubtless it was a very satisfactory thing of a Roman poet, when the wind was quiet, to get an audience about him, under a portico, and unwind his well-written scroll for an hour or two; but there must have been a vast deal of secret machinery, and influence, and agitation, to keep up his name with the people. The followers of Pythagoras, in another country, we know, said he had a golden leg, and this satisfied the people that his philosophy was divine. Truly were they the dark ages before the invention of newspapers. Besides, what became of literature when the poet's voice in the public bath, or library where he recited, was drowned by the din of arms? The arts were proverbially silent in the midst of arms, and literature was laid on the table for the next generation, while men's minds and morals went to ruin. If there were to be a general war in the world, as is threatened at this time, literature would be the gainer; authors would catch something of the military activity and spirit, and for every shot fired in the field we should have a hundred red-hot odes and pamphlets from the press.

What would we not give for a newspaper of the days of Homer, with personal recollections of the contractors and commanders in the siege of Troy; a reminiscence of Helen; the unedited fragments of Nestor; or a traditional saying of Ulysses, who may be supposed too wise to have published? What such a passage of literature would be to us, the journal of to-day may be to some long distant age, when it is disentombed from the crumbling corner-stone of some Astor House, Exchange, or Trinity Church, on the

deserted shore of an island, once New York! What matters of curiosity would be poured forth for the attention of the inquisitive; how many learned theories which had sprung up in the interim, put to rest; what anxiety moralists would be under to know the number of churches, the bookseller's advertisements, and the convictions at the Sessions! Some might be supposed to sigh over our lack of improvement, the infant state of the arts, and our ineffectual attempts at electro-magnetism, while others would dwell upon the old times when Broadway was gayer with life and the world got along better than it has ever done since. Let the reader separate for a moment the matter-of-course sensations of the day, that cause us to overlook so many enjoyments of thought and observation; break up the dull uniformity that environs us, and project himself into some other period, what a miracle of intelligence the newspaper appears—how solemn the handwriting of the past! A little imagination thrown in upon our daily habits would make life ten times the matter of enjoyment it is, and, according to a sound moral proportion, a hundred times better.

It is the fashion of every man of sense at the present day to have some doubts of the value of newspapers, but it is equally the fashion of every man of sense to read them with more or less of belief. Newspapers, in the judgment of some, have come to be a necessary evil: others state that they are destroying literature and sound thinking, with about as much reason as it is sometimes said, the sea will finally wash away one of the continents, because certain old-fashioned villages have been buried in the sand. The truth is, what is lost at one point is gained at another, and literature is in no more danger of newspapers than the land is of the ocean. The interests of newspapers and literature cannot well be separated. Some people seem to imagine with the Bhow Begum in the Doctor, that if a remark is good it must of necessity be written in a book, and that it is not fairly of any value till it is enclosed in covers, and endorsed with the gold leaf and lettering of the binder. There was a kind of childish superstitious feeling among some elegant authors of the last age, that a poem was not poetry unless printed in quarto, just as an earlier age wrote in folios. But as books have dwindled knowledge has increased, and a newspaper written, printed, and destroyed, almost within

the hour, has become the last best effort of intellectual refinement. The weekly issues of the London press show a wider range of thought, more of sound sense and manly thinking, a greater number of ideas, than appeared from the same city of old in a twelvemonth. It would be difficult to name a single author of the present era, who has not been in some way connected with the periodical press. Lord Byron published the *Liberal*, and Sir Walter Scott, the *Quarterly Review*; Coleridge wrote for a daily paper; Hazlitt lived only in magazines; even novels of connected interest are now published by single chapters in periodicals. Wordsworth is almost a solitary instance of an author who has published only in books. The rest have been content, like the fine old fellow of the old dramatists, Orlando Friscobaldo, 'to sow leaves in their youth and reap books in their age.' In this circumstance literature has neither gained or lost. The author has sought the pages of the periodical as the readiest method of transmitting thought. The newspaper finds its way into the most distant parts of the country, and to the most reserved fireside, while a good book lies unknown on the bookseller's counter.

But there are more serious interests connected with newspapers than the dissemination of pleasing or instructive books. The newspaper is the daily guardian of truth, the sworn friend of right and justice in the community. A graver question could not be discussed than the actual influence of the public press in this country; in what respects it meets the wants of the times; whether it fulfils its true law, or ever forgets its station to mingle with the strife it should control. This is a theme that requires the pen of Channing, but there are some features of the question evident to all. Every one must look to the press for the support of right and justice. The two requisites of periodical literature may be stated to be Independence of judgment and Sympathy of feeling. A man who writes for the guidance of the people must have the heart to embrace the interests of others as his brethren, and the honesty to be governed only by the truth and right in their advancement. The perfection of Journalism, in sad truth, is something to be talked of and desired rather than be often seen. But here as in other matters of conduct, there will be found a noble standard approached by some, and acknowledged even by those who wander from it most widely. Newspapers, it is

said, do not lead in the formation of public opinion ; they represent the immediate and local interests of the people, and derive their support from popular prejudice. This is a low view of authorship under any form, and in the aggregate of this kind of writing, certainly unfounded. In its nature literature is independent. The world of thought is free, removed above the obstacles action has to encounter on all sides, full of heaven-directed impulses, more in risk of over enthusiasm and quixotism than of meanness or subserviency to falsehood. It may be tied down to paltry time-serving interests ; but this is the bondage of a strong captive, who will soon again be free. Man's thoughts naturally desire the truth. In this atmosphere they live, and where any great wrong is promulgated, with whatever strength, there is a natural repugnance to it, though ease and avarice be on its side. The influence of literature must in the end be on the side of right : falsehood may triumph for a while, but it cannot bear the light of day. When untruth grows so daring to infect the literature of the country, it will be quarrelled with and perish. Error is always the herald of truth, and we may be sure wherever there is a great evil there will soon be a greater remedy.

The Journalist is enrolled an Advocate in the spiritual court of Truth, and he must plead her cause with never-tiring faithfulness. He has taken up the sword in the contest with error ; great power has been given him by the people, a greater responsibility rests upon him than upon the commander who is intrusted with the lives of thousands in the battle, and wo be to him if he falter or turn aside in the struggle. He has pledged himself to the welfare of society, he has himself assumed the task as a voluntary champion, and the world must needs look well to his performance. The press is next to the pulpit in the ministry of Truth ; they are but different orders of the same high service, archangels and angels of the same hierarchy ; one has the higher sanction of heaven, both are devoted to the single cause of human improvement. To him who in all faith and humility approaches the work, there is no nobler task for the best powers of the soul than that of working with the best men for the advancement of the best interests of the nation.

'Behold now this vast city ; a city of refuge, the mansion-house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his

protection ; the shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers waking, to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleagured truth, than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching reformation : others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement. What wants there to such a cowardly and pregnant soil, but wise and faithful laborers, to make a knowing people, a nation of prophets, of sages, and of worthies ?”*

D.

EVERY FOURTH YEAR.

IT is pretty well known all over the world by this time, we imagine, that the American people indulge themselves every four years with a national entertainment on a very grand scale. The chief figures in the diversion are two gentlemen ‘natural-born citizens, who have attained to the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years residents within the United States,’ who kindly offer themselves as objects of playful abuse, elegant invective, satirical dissection, and such other intellectual pastimes as their fellow-citizens may think proper to engage in at their exclusive risk and expense. This leads, of course, to many happy biographical sketches of the two gentlemen, many delicate investigations into various parts and passages of recent history. It is therefore now regarded as a question pretty well settled, that a candidate for the office of President of the United States, must be not only a gentleman of eminent civil capacity, but also one holding in perfect contempt the ordinary ease, comfort, and peace of mind, that citizens of a less noble temperament are supposed to seek after.

All the actions, traits, peculiarities, and characteristic features of his past life, his successful achievements, are as matter of course brought to light and examined with a truly

* Milton’s Areopagitica.

Cuvierian scrutiny and caution ; the shank-bone of the political mammoth meets with the same attention as the great spinal column ; and in a due state of preservation and dissection, he is presented to the public ; having first, however, undergone a grand inquest at Baltimore or Harrisburgh, where ten score and ninety coroners a side have passed upon the illustrious subject. Being thus formally invested with a candidateship, our mammoth politician strides forth into the field of controversy, and playfully swinging his trunk this way and that, and discharging its contents, covers the land in every quarter with huge epistolary blots and great patches of financial or other temporary disquisition.

Now commences the strife of giants : Anak to Anak, and, as in the conflict of Milton's angels, the very foundations of the earth are removed to furnish ammunition for the mighty battle. Against the person of the one combatant is discharged a long and fierce cannonade of cutting charges of recent misconduct ; while the other finds himself suddenly smitten, and actually reeling under the force of a ton-weight of decayed pamphlets, whirled about his ears by the sturdy arm of some committee or junto. The one is incontinently fetched a blow on the ear with a portentous file of some forgotten 'Advertiser' or 'Advocate,' and the other as summarily has all the wind knocked from his body politic by the clenched fist of an old campaigner or veteran reminiscent.

On all possible questions are the candidates' opinions demanded ; on all possible questions are answers given. Letter follows letter in the columns of the public journals, like peal on peal through a sultry tropical sky.

A general uncovering of abuses, corruptions, and enormities of either party takes place, and the whole country is filled with the outcry of exposed culprits, and the odor of governmental gangrenes. The land swarms with declarants and affidavit-makers. The office-holders stand to their arms ; and the office-seekers set up an astounding cry of siege and onslaught.

Miraculous changes of opinion are announced in the newspapers, and the names of twenty, thirty, or forty recusants to the administration in power are every now and then published like so many certificates to the efficacy of a new pill or patent nostrum, or the hand of a testator set to some solemn instrument, by which the whole power and patronage of the government are conveyed to the only lawful lega-

tees and descendants, the party then out of power. Canvasses are taken in steamboats and stage-coaches, at church-raisings and baby-christenings, by which the fate of the dominant party is held to be conclusively settled by majorities almost too great to be recorded and accredited. The age of hurly-burly and universal oratory has actually set in, and from every conceivable vantage-ground, the general deluge is loosened and descends upon the people in a long, copious, unintermitting flood for more than forty days and forty nights.

A contest like our recent General Election we imagine was never seen or known before in this or any other country. Fifteen millions of people, (for we hold that wives and children are implicated in all the acts of husband and father, and do, in the eye of law and truth, whatever is done by their principals,) hurrying to and fro in wagons, stage-coaches, and steamers ; lengthening out in bannered processions, or packing themselves close in dense auditories and masses ; silent as death or the calm midland sea under the breath of some potent speaker, or bursting again into shouts and multitudinous choral songs of political faith or political triumph. What eye has before seen spectacles like these ? Night marches by torch-light ; pilgrimages by land and water, from every point of the compass, every whither ; cities roaring like dens of lions, with a conflict of many voices ; inoffensive dorps and villages, rudely taken by the collar as it were, and roused into states of huge activity and immense bustle by delegations and committees from more stirring places : to what tends all this ? Simply to the calm, clear enunciation of the popular will. These were but the preliminary triumphs of that peaceful Conqueror and Arbiter, the Ballot-Box. By startling auspices like these was the approach of that little ark of our civil faith proclaimed ; and in the midst of such demonstrations, and in a conflict stormier than our history had ever known, was it placed high and supreme, above all dishonor, where God grant it may rest through all future times !

Six months or more before the momentous event—to speak more particularly of its incidents—painters, printers, engravers, were kept busily at work in furnishing ensigns of the most gorgeous colors, placards of an unrivalled magnitude of text, and badges of the greatest possible plausibility for house-tops, fences, and button-holes. The

whole intellectual activity—the literature of the country, for the time, seemed to take a political form. Epics yielded to long, narrative speeches; elegies were superseded by dolorous articles on hard times in the newspapers; Tom Moore was forgotten amid the sweeter melodies of ‘Tippecanoe and Tyler too;’ mathematical science was concentrated on the framing of election returns; and biography assumed the form of very life-like and racy sketches of the characters of the various candidates for office.

But more particularly was great industry displayed in the department of song-writing. So melodious an era was probably never before known in the whole history of the world. The ballad of Old Bishop Percy, the lay of the Minnesingers, the rondeau, the ode of Pindar and Dryden, were completely eclipsed by the race of improvising minstrels that suddenly sprung into existence in every quarter of the land. Impromptu was the rule of composition, and the bards chanted whatever the gods inspired on the spur of the occasion. They did not weary themselves with preliminary studies, with curry-combing Pegasus, and training and caparisoning him, with great show and outlay of labor, for the Parnassian journey. Not they! On the contrary, they stood up right manfully on the first barrel that presented, and proceeded instantly to do the task allotted. They did not cudgel their skulls for fine conceits or high-flying fancies; the first word that came was as good as Homer or Tyrtaeus, and they chanted on, singing and composing in a breath: and if what they uttered fell into metre, so much the better; if not, a thousand or two good bellowing voices roared the chorus through triumphantly, and bore it beyond criticism.

Among other things worthy of note, the principle of association seemed, during the recent canvass, to have suddenly acquired an astonishing force. The ordinary political gatherings and committees could not satisfy the gregarious propensity. Every possible kind of club was formed. A fraternal, a family feeling sprung up among politicians, and they were no longer to be seen singly, but always in troops and herds of hundreds or thousands. Among these, visits were passed in a truly excellent social spirit; New York making a journey of a hundred miles to interchange salutations with Dutchess county; and gentlemen assembling

under the delicate designation of 'Butt-Enders' in Brooklyn or Williamsburgh, exposing their exquisite persons to the fatigues of a ride of twenty miles or more to their brethren on the Island, the 'Molly-Hogs' of Patchogue.

The democratic tendency of the times was humorously betrayed in the ornithological and other designations which these clubs, in their baptismal fervor, saw fit to take to themselves. Leaving the national bird, the eagle, (who may be supposed to have not a few aristocratic and monarchical qualities,) in the clear upper air, they assumed, as the most hideous emblem they could fix upon, the great, stupid, staring Owl, the *Strix Cunicularia*, or burrowing owl of Bonaparte, and under his characteristic auspices, filled the night with their dreadful screeches and uproar. Rivalling these in happiness of title were the gentlemen of the Hyæna Club, who gave the world to understand, by this designation, that the fury and savageness of their partisanship were by no means to be called in question. Then there were the civilized and christian worthies, who, laboring under a terrible propensity to employ their lungs, and who, taking pleasure in affrighting quiet citizens by the strength of their clamors, carried on their trade under the style and appellation of Roarers. To these are to be added, Unionists, Faugh-Ballagh Boys, the political hussars of the rank and file, Tips, North-Benders, and a legion more of rare, curious, and felicitous description. For a time the community seemed to have lapsed into the barbarism of the original inheritors of the soil, and to be striving to restore, for a season, the old Indian divisions into tribes of every possible, bloody and ferocious designation. Some even had their war-whoops in true Indian style, and could give it with a truth and energy which satisfied all within hearing, of their genuine claim to the savage and barbarian character they had playfully assumed. Others, as we have elsewhere hinted, chanted heathen and outlandish ditties, with an effect, which a Mohawk or Seminole melodist might have pined to rival.

Let no man suppose, from this light and cheerful view of the subject, that we regard the recent contest with any other feelings than such as deep reverence and respectful consideration prompt. We look upon a general election like that through which we have just passed, as the great act of national supremacy. We listen to its verdict as to the

voice of a nation by no means feeble, by no means dishonored, by no means impaired or cast down. We take heed of it as the high periodical trial of the constitutional strength and the popular intelligence. No event is—no event can be to us, and to all Americans, nor in truth, rightly understood, to all the world, of graver import than this. Here is the earthquake incident to your boasted foundations; the quadrennial spasm that shall test the sinew and heart of your apparent vigor. Let us then, we implore you, so gird ourselves as to approach these grand recurring incidents with increased hope and faith, with increased means of encounter and triumph. From each conflict with this eventful occasion, let us come forth unbroken in strength, by all means: schooled, if it may be, how to avoid certain errors in its conduct, certain lapses from the spirit that should be with us before we enter upon it, and during its continuance. If possible, let the people, the mass and general people, be so elevated as not to need appeals to the eye or the appetite; nor to require enticing emblems or taking devices to fix their faith in this party or that. Let us bring our political strifes more and more to the broad tests of truth; to expositions of principle, and appeals to the sound hearts of enlightened thinkers. This cannot be done at once. It cannot be effected to-day nor to-morrow.

We do not take it upon ourselves to say that all emblems and devices are to be condemned and denounced as mere springes and impostures. Good hearts and true have been fired, at memorable times, to noble actions, by the sight of stars, or crescents, or meteors, floating over them; by the hovering wings of emblematical eagles, or the bronzed rage of visionary lions.

By the peculiar power of the imagination, such symbols are made to represent, in heroic brevity, the faith, the valor, the achievements, the whole glowing features of one's native land. With gathered force, all that she has done, perilled, or suffered, enters his warm heart, and stimulates him to put forth the best of his strength and manhood. Symbols are therefore needed, in a peculiar crisis, where much is to be wrought at the instant, or where the mind requires to be raised into a condition of more than ordinary intensity and force. But civil government is no such affair; that is in a great measure a matter of plain sense and deliberate procedure. Calm and unimpassioned understand-

ings are required to construe constitutions, to examine and discuss questions of administration, and to scrutinize and compare the characters of candidates for office. No heroic ardor is needed in the performance of these plain duties. There is no sudden, instantaneous effect to be produced, which calls for direct, dazzling appeals to the eye or the ear. Time does not press ; months may be taken to form opinions, and months more to act upon them. The enemy does not stand before you to be cut down or borne over by one sweep of sabres, or a single charge of cavalry. He is to be reached at a great distance and by circuitous approaches. He is to be conquered by delay, which matures opinion ; and to be wrought upon by peaceful spells, speaking to him, reasoning with him from the little aulic chamber of the Ballot.

It is fair matter of question whether too much is not staked on this single cast for the Presidency.

Was it intended by the framers of our constitution that such extraordinary, overwhelming prominence should be given to the executive office ? That it should be made the object of intense hope, of agonizing apprehension, as it now is ? On the contrary, if we read aright the policy of the founders of this government, it was meant that the whole federal administration should advance in a line, occupying an equal share of the public jealousy and the popular regards. Events have in some degree wrested this purpose aside : the personal character of some of our Chief Magistrates, and in other cases, the incidents of their time, have caused the general eye to be fixed with too great anxiety on this single office, and to associate with its doings the whole conduct of government. The President of the United States is not, should not be the government of the United States. It is folly and madness so to regard him ; it is treason and sacrilege for him so to regard himself. On this point the public mind has taken a false bias for several years past, and with monomaniac violence to truth, has wrought innumerable evils by neglecting the claims of the other elements of government on their attention. Standing singly as he does, the President will at all times attract a large share of observation and notice ; but alone, unsupported or disconcerted by other authorities, his power for evil is comparatively slight and superficial. He can cast arrows of desolation into the land ; but these failing, the nerve that impels them home

is utterly wanting, and they fall harmless in the midst of the people. As recently administered and regarded, the Presidential arm is clothed with thunder, and whatever bolt is shot forth rattles and blazes through the whole length of the land, scattering dismay, confusion, and ruin. In a tranquil and regulated view of this office, these things could not be.

The Presidency of these United States is certainly a glittering mark; a grand epoch in any man's career to become an historical personage, in the same noble line with Washington and Adams. But is not the ambition of our greatest intellects too much directed to this point? Is not this office regarded too much as the only supreme station of honor and renown? To be Chief Magistrate of twenty-six sovereign states is a noble pre-eminence; but is it nothing to be Chief Thinker, Chief Teacher, or Chief Poet of the same Union? Are arms and civil power to wrest away forever, from majestic learning, from passionate truth, from climbing philosophy, the crown and laurels of the earth? We trust not. The sword protects, the truncheon sustains our chartered privileges as communities: but deeper into the nature of man, and with a more potent and fruitful energy, does the voice of the uninaugurated thinker pierce. He labors at the foundations of humanity; and there discovers hope and charity, fancy full of earnest dreams that fore-shadow truth, faith in man, reverence and divine aspirations, without which all government and social administration would straightway crumble into chaos and barbarous disorder.

There are other pinnacles besides the Capitolian, which we desire to see occupied. Office and power dazzle the world for a season, and shake it with their loud chariot-wheels; but they pass away, and the still small voice of the printed thought, then unheeded, breaks forth on the after age with an almost supernatural clearness and force of utterance. The statesman is pursued by shouting and tumultuous multitudes; while the poor scholar, (the master and tyrant of his destiny,) is strolling in some far-off silent field with a single friend. The next generation, perhaps the very next year, right comes into possession of his own, and while thousands hang on every breath of the poet, the poor politician is gone into the land of forgetfulness, accompanied only by the shadow of his renown.

M.

THE MOUND-BUILDERS' DIRGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BEHEMOTH."

' Winding through the villages—over the meadows—and along the stream-side, they reach the bank right opposite the mounds in which the dead are to find their final slumber. Descending into the limpid and shallow stream, the bearers gently dip each corpse beneath the waters—thus purifying it by a natural sort of baptism from every earthly grossness, and then they resume their way—all following with bared ankles through the placid rivulet. At length they reach the sacred mound. At its side, toward the east, the earth is removed, and, turning their faces to the sun, while the marble breathes forth a higher strain, the bearers of the dead enter the hallowed mound. As they enter, the throng chant together a simple ballad, reciting the virtues and the valor of the departed, and, at its close, recommending them to the Giver of life and the God of the seasons.' *Behemoth; Part First*, p. 17. The poem alluded to in the foregoing passage, was, for various reasons, thought to be sufficient at the time, omitted; and is now given to the public.

I.

Blow, softly blow ! thou sad and soul-dissolving melody :
And plaintive roll, ye rippling sounds along the airy sea.
Blithe skylarks and sweet violets commingle voice and breath
To beautify and harmonize the warrior's timeless death.

II.

Unlock, sweet earth, thy fresh green mould, and grant the dead repose,
And gently o'er their valiant dust thy verdant barriers close.
No more the blood-stained sword—the flushed and fevered brow no more
Shall they bear back in pomp unto their peaceful dwelling-door.

III.

Their steel-clad feet no more shall ford the clear and rapid stream ;
No more their proud and glittering helms in noonday's brightness gleam.
Long rest their martial hearts in peace where they are calmly laid,
Until to dust their tributary dust is gently paid.

IV.

Oh, Thou who kindly guardest men, in battle and in peace ;
Who givest life, and grantest from its strifes a soft release,
Pour down thy summer dews, thy autumn rains upon this mound,
And give a glory to the earth and sky that freshen round.

THE NOVEL OF SENTIMENT.

THE Novel of Sentiment was the latest product of the Age of Chivalry. It may appear far-fetched, to take this view, but we believe it to be historically correct. The extravagancies of the Middle Age in point of gallantry and romance, had, at last, become sobered down to something of a more domestic and chastened character. Heroism was brought to a more confined scale, and narrower limits. The Knight-errant became extinct, but the modern gentleman took his place. There is an historical instance parallel to this. The famous thirty years' war in Germany occurred at least a century after the Reformation first broke out. It was the ultimate effect of which the Reformation was the first cause. Thus slow is time in its evolution of consequences! A long period is requisite to consummate the predominant fact or idea of every age, epoch, or era. It may be also observed, that the seeds long germinating often produce fruit quite dissimilar in external appearance from the parent stock. The Exploits of the Grand Cyrus have dwindled down into the History of the Man of Feeling, and the romances of Scuderi have been supplanted by the Life of Marianne.

The Novel of Sentiment is now virtually dead. It has been superseded by the historical romance, by German legends, and tales of the sea. The gradual advancement of society tends to skepticism : as the young man laughs at what the boy admired. We lose grace as we grow in years. Feeling is dulled, sentiment loses its hold on us, and we become cautious and interested. We have no time for love : we forget to pity.

The sentiment of prose fiction, to be agreeable, should hardly possess the elevation of the heroic standard ; it must come nearer to humanity. It must be generous and manly in the men, and tender and graceful in the women.

Of the writers of sentiment there are few ; of sentimental writers, a thousand.

Sterne, Mackenzie, Mrs. Inchbald, Marivaux, I take to be the four great writers in this department—the four masters of the tender passion—the four authors, who, above all other writers of prose fiction, have supremely excelled in

painting the emotions of the heart. The first three are well known ; the last almost unknown. The *Sorrows of Werter* are flimsy and extravagant. A very different judgment is to be passed on the *Confessions of a Fair Saint*, in *Wilhelm Meister*. Throughout the whole of this admirable novel, are scattered the finest passages of sentimental description. It is generally sufficient to condemn sentiment altogether, to say that it is French—the common opinion of its declamatory tone being supported partly by popular ignorance and prejudice, partly by some gross examples among their authors. But Marivaux is a Frenchman of the best heart and feeling. In our own country, Irving is an imitator of Mackenzie : Dana alone is master of a deep vein of sentiment, the offspring rather of the intellect than of the heart.

Sterne is celebrated. Poor Maria—the Imprisoned Starling—the Dead Ass—the story of Lefevre—Corporal Trim—his sermon, his fidelity—my Uncle Toby's benevolence—my Father's learned punctuality, are masterpieces. The admirable style of Sterne, the most conversational of all the old novelists, has been overlooked in the brilliancy of his wit and the naturalness of his pathos. He has little story, but is full of satire, quick allusion, and pathetic situation. His characters are great talkers, and have all of them feeling hearts. Would all the world had such innocent hobbyhorses as those my Father and Uncle Toby used to ride!

Mackenzie has a fine vein of poetical description, with an elegant sadness and a sweet contemplative humor. The *Man of Feeling* is as unique and individual in its way, as *Hudibras* or the *Pilgrim's Progress*. It is the only successful and standard novel of its kind in the language.

Mrs. Inchbald was a woman ; and when we say that, we mean to express, that she wrote with a tact and a subtlety that properly belong to women of elegant and cultivated sensibility. There is a charm in her novels, beyond the wit of Sterne, and out of the reach of the elegant Mackenzie, for it lies deeper. It is the charm of a simple naturalness. She paints real characters in probable situations. She abundantly refutes Rousseau's doctrine that women can never describe the passion of love. Perhaps he thought they felt it too intensely to describe it with effect and power.

Marivaux, of whom I have the more to say, as he is less known, is a sort of French Mackenzie. He is more; a half La Bruyere, with a slight infusion of Sterne. Sometimes, indeed, he so closely resembles Sterne, that an English reader might suspect imitation. But Marivaux was Sterne's model. The latter did not produce Tristram Shandy until the former had ceased to write. They had, notwithstanding, several qualities in common. Both had little narrative, though in this respect, I think the Frenchman had the advantage; each relies more upon sentiment and reflection than character or incident. Of the two, Sterne had the most wit, Marivaux the finest sentiment. Marivaux was not wanting in quiet perception of the absurd or incongruous, but his wit was subservient to his other powers. He excelled all other writers in a fine ethereal essence, a metaphysical refinement of sentiment. Delicacy is his ruling trait; a delicacy that colored with the softest hues every faculty of his understanding, that pointed his wit, gave depth to his satire, and impressed his slightest observations with an air of subtlety and elegance. To such an extent was the imitation of this writer carried by his admirers, as to give rise to the expression *Marivauxage*, as we speak, at the present day, of the *Bulwerisms* of the author of Pelham.

I know of but three English writers who make any mention of Marivaux. The exclamation of Gray is familiar; Blair passes a judicious criticism on him, in the critical style of the old school, and Hazlitt speaks of his 'sentimental refinement.' The English, I suspect, know little of Marivaux, but I cannot think his countrymen have forgotten him. The Life of Marianne (his principal work) is an autobiography. It is the old story, of constancy and neglect; of true love, and its trials. The Life of Marianne is a scene of temptation and disappointed hope. Now, all is fair and promising; anon, the clouds lour and the sky is overcast. One minute is of joyful expectancy; the next, of almost utter despair. Ah! Marianne, thy life is the mirror of the lives of many. The perfidiousness of Valville is the counterpart of most men's behaviour. We love, get tired, love another. A woman loves once, and forever. Let a woman have never so many lovers, let her become every man's mistress, still she looks back to the one who first possessed both her heart and person. Vanity or interest may keep others in her train, love holds but one. The heart can be deeply touched

but once. Other loves are sensual, or partly such. Sometimes we love from compassion ; sometimes from pride. We are often flattered into loving by the admiration of others. We love others because they first loved us. There is a love of the head, and with which the heart has nothing to do. But the only genuine passion is a certain instinctive and contemporary sympathy. Neither can date the period of their mutual passion. Love, like faith, like poetry, is an instinct. To talk to a young lover of reason is as absurd as to change him into ice ; or to stop an echo by telling it to cease. Let me not be misunderstood ; there is judicious love, and it is the highest, the purest, the only lasting species of attachment. But, how rare is that ! How much love, so called, is customary and matter of habit ! Most married love is such. Living in daily companionship with one, we cannot fail to become attached by a thousand bonds. Necessity is the mother of this sort of affection. We have in such love a very comfortable thing, but is it what poets have sung and painters depicted ever since Eve first breathed her soft sighs of passion in the Garden ? Is it the noble and generous sentiment that possesses the heart of a genuine man and a true woman ? Is it that which has made of frail women martyrs for the sake of the loved one ? What nobler virtue can we conceive of as mortals, than the self-sacrifice of a confiding woman ? The world thinks little of such heroism—laughs at it. But I appeal to you, sweet maids—I will not ask you, ye daughters of affliction, if I exaggerate the truth—do I err in believing, that in this heartless world of human beasts, there is such a thing as a pure, disinterested woman's heart ? I know I do not. Pride teaches us to cover many a secret history, or the world could not contain the volumes that might be written to disclose the secrets of aching hearts. We despise cant and sentimentality as heartily as the severest critic ; but we reverence truth, and worship constancy. While the world lasts love must last, and those who say there is no love, may continue to sneer ; still, God has given us a heart, and if it be not to love something or somebody, it were better torn out of our breasts at once, rather than be left to rankle with malice, to become cold by custom, to be dulled by insensibility, contracted by meanness, shrivelled by avarice, or broken by disappointment.

We have run on beyond all episodical limits. Marianne

has the fortune to meet with the most favorable chances of happiness, just to lose them. She thinks she meets a friend in a Mr. De Climal, an austere hypocrite, who endeavors to seduce her after a pious fashion ; he afterwards repents, and on his death-bed, (a most affecting scene,) begs her forgiveness, and shows his honor and his will. Valville, after a most ardent courtship, commenced in the most romantic manner, and continued against the opposition of a host of relations, ignorant of her admirable perfections, and prejudiced against her, on the most frivolous grounds, is suddenly captivated by a new face (not near so sweet as Marianne's,) and a person (not half so lovely,) and on the very point of marriage, after the very wedding-day is appointed, grows cool, and deserts her. All her love had been placed on him—that misplaced, she retires to a convent, where the work, unfinished, leaves her.

In one respect, Marianne was always fortunate. She made good friends wherever she went, and into whatever company she entered. These were chiefly ladies, estimable for their worth, and charming from their cultivation. She has drawn all their characters, and with the soft precision of the clear Vandyke.

Marivaux held no clumsy pencil—he was no Holbein. His intellect was feminine, else he had never hit the female character and style with such nicety. Marianne, at length tried by adversity, rendered firm by misfortune, is confirmed into a philosopher—not a blue-stocking, but a rational Christian. She sometimes gossips, but more frequently moralizes. She distinguishes with the most delicate subtlety, but seldom offers to debate a question. Her heart and intellect have come out of the furnace of affliction clear of all alloy. She has no spirit of controversy in her. She reviews her past life with the exactest care, and treasures up emotions that were first born in her years ago. The Life of Marianne should be read by every woman, as a means of consolation, a source of counsel, beyond its mere power of entertainment. It has a high moral value, and of how few novels can we say that !

I have said the striking trait of Marivaux was a certain delicacy. This is not to be mistaken for weakness. It must be recollect that a woman writes, and strength is not the attribute of woman. To give an example of this delicacy of sentiment and his graceful style, the whole book ought to

be quoted. This fine spirit runs through the whole of it. To give a slight specimen of his tact in delicate satire, I subjoin the following passages, in translation. Marianne is speaking of inquisitiveness, and makes this acute remark.

'There is a sort of people whose mind never acts, through want of thoughts and ideas. This is what makes them so greedy after strange objects, and especially because they retain no impressions, and because every thing, as it were, runs through their mind, and immediately vanishes. A kind of people always *looking* at, or *listening* to, but never *thinking* of any thing. I shall compare them to *a man who passes his whole life in looking out of his window*.' The next is the character of a formalist, a standard character—'I mean one that spoke gravely and with dignity of a coach she had bespoken; of an entertainment she had given; of a story the Marchioness such a one had told her; and then it was the Dutchess of what d'ye call 'em, who began to recover, but who had taken the air too soon; she had indeed scolded her much for it, and told her it was a burning shame; and then it was a very haughty repartee she very apropos made the day before to that Mrs. such a one, who used to forget herself now and then, because she was rich, who made not the proper difference between herself and women of a certain distinction.'

'These are faint flashes of the fine genius of Marivaux. The most exquisite passages and scenes cannot be transferred without mutilation.

The author of Paul Felton is the only writer who ought to be mentioned immediately after Marivaux, or rather the author of 'Edward and Mary,' and 'the Son.' The sentiment of Mr. Dana is masculine, grave, solemn, and impressive. Paul Felton made an impression on me time cannot erase. What a misty, gloomy vastness of despair doth it picture—a fearful story!

The more domestic pictures of Mr. Dana are perfect, and how cheerful! A good man only could feel as he feels; a man of genius only could write as he has written.

MR. COOPER.*

THE Romance of History is an exhausted vein of writing from which the ore has long disappeared. In the hands of its master, Sir Walter Scott, the historical novel was a work of art equally with the histories of Shakspeare. Sir Walter put life into the marrowless bones and lit up once more the light in the eyes of old skeleton traditions. Like the discoverer of one of the great western caves, he was the first to make known the untried wonders of fairy halls, the beauty of hidden grottoes, the secret sport of time encrusting virgin pillars of white with crystals of frozen water, and those freakish labors in which nature works, in her study, resemblances to the beasts, birds, the architecture, the very men of the outer world. His imitators resembled that herd of guides and vulgar travellers who rush in at the heels of the discoverer, mar the beauty of the work by chisels and hammers, blacken the pure walls with tallow torches, and end by writing their names in the smoke. Or, they may more charitably be compared to a troop of servants swarming in upon the remains of a feast where the host had but just dined. After Scott's success, the historical novel became a fashion, and like all the fashions of this world, it soon passes away. The production of a work of this kind was soon made as mechanical as the outpouring of moral commonplaces in an essay after the days of the Spectator. Romances were written to order: the annals of all nations were ransacked to furnish a plot and story; no country was spared; not even our own forest land, which must give up its buried Indians: no events were too sacred; the most venerable themes were subjected to the grave ridicule of being paraded in a motley carnival dress of cast-off finery. History and fiction were both degraded. The novel was one of those things to be once done, and ever after left alone. The best evidence of its poverty, at present, is the ease with which such works are prepared. To a man of original mind, who sees the real wants of the

* *Mercedes of Castile: or a Voyage to Cathay.* By the author of the *Bravo, &c.* Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard: 2 vols. 12mo.

subject, it is the most difficult kind of writing; to an imitator the very easiest. But it is not the form of composition a first-rate man should select for the exercise of his pen. Truth is now better than fiction. The present is greater than the past: a living man with hopes, and aims, and faculties to attain them, or fall short of them, is a nobler object, though in rags, than Pharaoh in all his glory. There are few readers who would not prefer an article by Macaulay, in the Edinburgh Review, where real personages are introduced in their true shape as they lived, to the mongrel fact and fiction of the historical romance. A profound critical spirit is abroad, a spirit of earnestness, sympathy, and labor-loving investigation, which needs no aid of fiction to commend its literary products to the world. If the world were dependent upon the novelist for a knowledge of the facts of history, long preliminary disquisitions and connecting chapters would be welcome, but history is better learned from other sources. Besides, the facts must be altered or suppressed to suit the demands of the story. What is good, the proper *humanity* of the novel, is interrupted by the historical machinery: to get at a few traits of nature we must read through two volumes, narrating the policy of courts and the genealogy of a race of sovereigns. If we escape this pedantry, the chances are that we fall upon some melodramatical historical pageant, described through a series of chapters, and out of place anywhere, except on the boards of a third-rate theatre for the benefit of a third-rate audience. The chief objection to the historical novel is its want of directness. A tale of true love can be told without a long dissertation on the affairs of nations, and the revival of various lords, ladies, and serving-men, to fill up the stage as supernumeraries. Historical personages may be made the subjects of fictitious narrative, and historical events the means of bringing out character and aiding a poetical distribution of justice in the plot. The field of history is open to the novelist, as it is to the dramatist; but such aid should be very sparingly used. The mere elucidation of historical questions ought never to be united with a work of fiction. History and the novel should remain distinct.

With these impressions of the defects of the historical romance, we regret that Mr. Cooper, in his late work, should have chosen a subject which can receive so little aid from fancy, and one so likely to obscure the powers of the novel-

ist, as the discovery of America. Washington Irving's perfect, pure narrative will always remain the only true romantic history of that event to the English reader. It is not our purpose to review, in detail, the work of Mr. Cooper, but furnish the reader with a few general remarks, applicable to the class of writings in which 'Mercedes of Castile' is found. To many, the form of the work, we think, will be an insurmountable objection to its perusal: in other respects it will be found neither better nor worse than the other productions of the author. The literary merits and defects of Mr. Cooper have been long settled; between himself and his enemies, his good and bad points have been set before the public so often that we seem to know them by instinct, and can, at a glance, when a new Precaution novel appears, refer to the good parts, the indifferent, and the bad. The most constant faculty of Mr. Cooper is his judgment; always acute and intelligent, but over-refined, and exercised upon all occasions, sometimes on insufficient premises it has been taken by some for suspicion. He is sensitive without the accompaniment of the poetical temperament, so he is more ready to suspect than forgive. He has imagination enough to conceive a plot, the circumstances of which are sufficiently like life, and people it with true mariners and Indians. In his female characters, which may be taken as the nicest test of a novelist's abilities, he is deficient. They are nothing better than the walking manakin which Mr. Willis introduced into his comedy at the Park. The style of the novels is commonly clumsy and confused, from the very circumstance that so much pains is taken to be explicit. He leaves nothing to the reader's comprehension, but is forever giving a motive. The latter member of a sentence has generally the onerous task to perform of explaining the first. There is a gratuitous abundance of knowledge and advice which is something tedious. The dialogues and narrative are uphill work till the author gets to the height of his subject, when he is bold, vigorous, and full of life. In his descriptions of nature he is unsurpassed. He selects the chief circumstances, and sets them forth on the canvas to speak for themselves. He has a vast strength and earnestness at times, which, in spite of all faults, make him the very first of American writers.



THE FIELD DEATH.

LITTLE Tom Hubble was a miserable wretch, a poor beggarly scamp, and might as well have been, for all the provision this world made for him in the way of food, raiment, and lodging, a little shivering cherub on one of the tombstones in the Gowannus churchyard. It is true, Tom enjoyed the reputation of living with a flourishing old grandfather, who thought all the world of Tom, and who was supposed to do nothing else all day but contrive projects how he should live on pudding and poultry, be clad in fine linen and exquisite broadcloth, and lie down in soft beds, with the echo of pleasant stories narrated for his special benefit, lingering in his ear to soothe his slumbers. Tom, however, who had a way of seeing things that was peculiar to himself, was pretty well convinced that what he discovered regularly three times a day on a little pine table in the corner of a small back kitchen, was a veritable dish of black scraps of bread, with two or three dry beans straggling about amongst them ; that the apparel in which he was allowed to endue his paltry limbs whenever he went abroad, was to be sure a sort of gala-dress made up of motley fragments of the old gentleman's cast-off garments, in various stages of antiquity and decay—but that his actual in-door daily garments consisted of little more than a small carter's frock, a straw hat in a state of decline, and a pair of high boots that served for stockings, pantaloons, and leggins.

Besides all this, Tom was either so wonderfully acute or so miserably stupid as to discern in the couch on which these same limbs, so ignominiously treated in broad-day, were stretched at night, nothing more nor less than a pallet of hard straw, in a little cock-loft, with a bag of musty bran by way of a pillow.

Notwithstanding all these little circumstances, Tom's grandfather was accounted and held by all Gowannus to be a large-souled, spirited old gentleman, who knew what became his dignity as the oldest inhabitant and freeholder of that respectable village as well as any man, although he did indulge in one or two trifling eccentricities, which, if they had been known to the said towns-people, might have materially abated their respect ; one of which was, that the old gentleman professed to obtain his household supplies from

sundry friends of his who were in that line of business in town, and who chose to show the intensity of their affection for him in this substantial way. Whereas the truth was, and this the old gentleman knew perfectly well, he was in the habit of stealing over to the city when he would be least missed, and purchasing at very low rates and from very low traders, cheap articles in a somewhat decayed and questionable state of preservation. The other singularity which tended to blind the sagacious burghers, was a habit of his (as in the case of poor Tom) of never presenting himself in public unless in full costume, and of a very picturesque and imposing character ; consisting of a venerable white broad-brim, a reverend, wide-skirted blue coat, with silver buttons, small-clothes of an excellent quality, polished top-boots, and an emphatic cane, with a head as white and bald as that of the old grandfather himself.

Although it will be seen from this that the astute commonalty and gentry of Gowannus were in the way of being slightly deluded and overreached, yet was Tom Hubble inclined to look upon it all as a pleasant little entertainment, with undress rehearsals in the old house, and performances in the open air : with the exception of the spare diet, and that he thought hadn't the slightest perceptible flavor of humor in it, but on the contrary was to be held as extremely dull, barren, and unsatisfactory.

With some such reflections passing through his mind, Tom sate one morning at his little pine table, endeavoring to enliven his dry meal with a few grains of salt that he had brought in his pocket, from an old fisherman acquaintance of his, upon his scattered beans, when he was suddenly roused by the old gentleman's shouting in his ear in a very obstreperous voice—

‘What the devil are you about, boy !—Putting salt on your beans ?’

‘Yes ! this *is* salt—I believe,’ said Tom, timidly.

‘Are you sure it’s salt—you young rascal ?’ roared the old gentleman. ‘Isn’t it rock-crystal powdered, or white sand, or something of that sort ?—Come, you had better make it out one of these two !’

‘It’s salt—nothing but common table-salt,’ reiterated poor Tom Hubble.

‘Nothing but common table-salt—you thriftless young vagabond : you talk of it as familiarly as if you had seen it

every day of your life. You'll be the ruin of me yet, with your extravagant ways—I know you will !'

'No I won't, grandfather,' said Tom, with some slight hesitation, as if the boldness of the old man's prediction had made him a partial believer in what he propounded.

'Yes you will—don't tell me you won't,' said the cross-grained old gentleman. 'None of your won'ts and shan'ts, and don'ts and mustn'ts with me. Your day's over in this house, so you may get out as soon as you choose !'

Tom stole a glance at his grandfather, and then shivered a little ; then he took up a crust in his fingers, shivered a little more, dropped his crust, and stole another glance ; scarcely knowing where he was, or what he was doing.

'I say you may get out of the house,' shouted the grandfather. 'Isn't that plain Saxon English ? Get you gone : you have devoured my substance long enough !'

Without allowing Tom any great length of time to ponder on the true interpretation to be given to these passages, the old man stepped forward, kicked over the little pine table, scattering the contents of the dish far and wide over the floor ; seized Tom himself by the collar, and dragging him through the outer room, pushed him swiftly into the street. He then rapidly closed the door, turned a bolt, and took his station at a window which looked out upon poor Tom Hubble, and watched the further pleasure of that forlorn youth. Poor Tom's first motion on finding himself landed in the street, was to turn about and make a survey of the edifice, from which it was his impression, although he was not sure of it, he had just been summarily ejected. True enough, there it stood, the same dilapidated, discolored old building with which he had been familiar so many years ; yes, and there in the old window was displayed a full-length illustration that satisfied him his construction of the text could not be far amiss. The truth then was, he had been turned out of his grandfather's house in open day, and there stood his grandfather muttering curses, and raising his hands to heaven, in imprecations of trouble and disaster upon his poor, weak, childish head ; and what should he do ?

Tom's first inclination was to go and drown himself in a dreary pool, that stood in a cluster of hemlocks beyond the hill ; then he thought he would like to fly with the wind into remote places, deserts, and wildernesses, where he should be all alone, and never see again the cruel face of that old

grandsire of his. He ended by rambling away, like one bewildered, he knew not whither, only getting farther and farther from the village at each step, and saddening as he walked. Now and then he paused a moment, thinking that he had better go back, and falling on his knees before the old man, beg his forgiveness with clasped hands and weeping eyes—he knew not for what—and find shelter once more under the old roof, and try to be happy in spite of cares and crosses, and spare meals : but as he gained the brow of the upland, the good resolution strengthening momently within him, he ventured to look back at the old homestead, (the bower of his boyhood,) and there he discovered, through tears that almost blinded him, his old grandfather still standing, rigid as a statue, in the window, his bald head uncovered, and his hands uplifted in the same fixed attitude of malediction and menace. This decided him, and he wandered on. He reached a sunny little meadow beyond the brow, and there he sate down, and in spite of his sorrows, could not fail to take note of the little creatures at his feet ; in truth never were they more dear to Tom than now that he was deserted of all the world. The high-vaulting grasshopper was foremost, cutting all sorts of capers in the air ; the solemn cricket was faring to and fro in his black cloak, like a friar full of errands through all his little parish of greenland ; toads, yes, toads, as airy and fantastic as clowns at the circus, were caprioling about in their spotted jackets ; and large bullfrogs, emerging from the spring, came shambling up the slope, and with their great eyes stared at poor Tom, as if they felt very anxious to know what it was that troubled him.

Thus he straggled about all day in a kind of wild dream made up partly of gloomy images of the village-life he had fled, and partly of pleasanter fancies drawn from what was about him. His little heart warmed toward every fair object that he saw, and he scarcely passed a tree greener than others without feeling what happiness there was in this world ; and then, again, as the shadow of old sorrows fell upon him, it grew as cold and dreary as a stone. Night was coming on fast ; Tom had had no food all that day ; but shelter from the chill air and the bleak winds he must have, and accordingly, after due thought and pondering, he made his way with some difficulty into a piece of dark woods, far

off to the southeast ; and embowering himself in a thick shade of bushes, he sought rest for his little, weary limbs.

All that night he lay in the wood, slumbering a little at times, and then starting up at sight of strange objects that haunted his dreams ; in truth the whole region seemed, to fanciful little Tom, to be full of all sorts of wonderful spectacles and singular noises. At one time he thought he heard a lion's roar, away off in a dismal corner that he recollects passing, and which, now that he bethought himself, might have been a veritable lion's lair ; and then he imagined that he discovered up in the twilight gloom of the tree-tops, great birds of evil omen brooding and hovering about, and ready to pounce on him with their hungry talons. About midnight, however, he was wakened by steps passing lightly by, and looking forth from his covert, he discovered a coffin borne on poles by two men, who seemed dejected, as he could gather from their bowed heads and slow steps, and to be bearing a burden that was heavy to their hearts, although light enough it might be to their mere manly strength. They seemed, too, to have come from a great distance, and to have had a gloomy midnight march upon the highway, for the coffin was covered with dust, and wet with dew.

'This poor child is dead,' said one of them, as they passed, 'and thanks to God for it ! Her dwelling-place was full of strifes, and gloom, and sadness; but her grave shall be, I promise you, one after her own heart !'

'Do you think we are pursued ?' asked the other.

'Not at all : not at all !' he answered promptly. 'He dare not do that ! it would be too great a peril even for him to meet a brother in this lone wood, by the side of her coffin.'

'Did she die then of a broken heart, as people say ? are you sure of that ?'

'Come with me to-morrow, after she is laid safely in the earth,' he answered, 'and I will show you the little window out of which the poor girl used to lean when it was breaking, and I'll point to the grass underneath it, where her warm young tears (God make them fruitful of remorse to him !) fell, and ask you whether it is not greener, and taller, and darker too, than any that grows near the spot.' The young man laid down his end of the bier for a moment, turned his back upon his companion, and wrung his hands convulsively together. It was for a moment only, and resuming his burden they hurried on.

This seemed to be a timely lesson preached to poor little Tom, and one that taught him how, when the great world is slumbering in cities and hamlets, when church-towers, and mighty squares and thoroughfares are asleep, there is sometimes a deep, restless sadness in the heart of obscure places, and that men are tossed, and vexed, and tormented with wrongs that would keep the world awake, if it but knew of them.

Tom felt that he was not alone, even in that dark thicket—which he had deemed impervious to the track of man—but that other hearts were bleeding with his, and that time was bringing on the funeral company, and the train of mourners as well there as he could in the open fields in broad day, or through the village-street on sabbath afternoons.

When day dawned it wakened through the wood many cheerful melodies, that had slept there all night long, and which, had they but spoken in the darkness and gloom, would have sounded like angels' voices to the poor boy; but were now in the broad day no comfort whatever to him.

He crept forth from his lodging as cheerless as child well could be; nothing moving in his mind but a vague desire of returning to the village, and making good the name he must have lost by his flight, by casting himself at the very door-stone of his stern old grandfather, and imploring him to come forth and take his life, for charity's sake. With this sharp anguish at his heart, the boy stood on the brow above Gowannus, looking at times to the great city beyond the river, and wondering if in all its mighty throng there was one poor wretch as sad, as hungered, and disconsolate as he.

By slow, uncertain, timorous steps, he wound his way down the slope, and found himself, now that the morning had grown into a full bright day, standing in an open field or common in the very centre of the village.

Tom's return, quiet and sad as it was, seemed to set the little place beside itself; for he had no sooner planted a foot on village ground than the whole region was in an uproar. Heads were thrust from windows, moping and mowing and making faces of disdain and anger at him; fingers were pointed from every direction toward his unhappy person, and even the village children, who should have felt for little Tom's cares and troubles as if they had

been their own, formed themselves into a mob and commenced pelting him, at a distance, with stones and dirt.

Tom was no saint, at least no Saint Stephen, to submit meekly to this species of martyrdom, and might have avenged himself to his heart's content on this detachment of his enemies, had not his turning about to do so, always produced a very sudden and ignominious dispersion of the small gentry, who fled pell-mell, crying out that Tom—ugly Tom was after them. To be sure there was a single cheerful ray in this gloomy hour of Tom's trial, for as he stood, the centre of all these angry eyes and this shower of contumely, a poor old fisherman, a sort of crony of his, came up and accosted him with an open hand, but having business somewhere or other not to be neglected, he was compelled to hurry away, and to leave the little sufferer alone, with the cold blood rippling about his heart, like a tide at sea.

After a while the fierce eyes were drawn in, the admonitory heads ceased to wag, and the school-bell called the little scholars away, and Tom, weary, and sad, and riveted as it were to the spot, sat down on a stone, a sort of horse-block, and tried to think over the unlucky chances of the day, and to sound his own little heart to learn from it how he had borne himself in his troubles; whether as a true-hearted, noble boy, or as a sad fear-nought and scape-gallows. He found nothing there that reproached him very sharply; and then he looked about him to see whether natural objects, such as the sky, the earth, and the great bay, gave note of any sudden change, which might have driven men out of their wits, to treat him thus.

The earth seemed as green and fresh as ever; the little knolls looked as cheerful, and the little nooks and valleys as calm and shady. The sky had certainly lost none of its brightness, but stood there as blue, as serene, and immovable, as it did the first time he looked up to it; and there lay the glorious bay, as proud, as hospitable, as inviting to great ships, as on the first day it smiled on the Half-moon of Heinrich Hudson. He did not know that the old man had caused the town to believe how that vile off-shoot of his, Tom Hubble, had smitten him, his old grandsire, and spate upon him, and fled from him with curses and fiendish looks, like a little wretch as he was. This Tom did not know, and so he sate there, an image of silent despair, in the midst of

all the life and bustle of noonday, plunged in deep thought ; when a tall figure, unobserved by him, glided from an old dwelling behind, and stealing on him unawares, its arm was stretched over his shoulder, and ere he could do more than discover, in the shadow that fell before him, one which he knew, from its often before having stealthily marred his boyish sports and pleasures—a knife had struck deep into his unquiet little heart, and given it rest at once and forever. Unnoticed by any, the figure glided back.

Tom's head declined upon his knees without a gasp or groan ; and in that posture the poor boy's corpse remained through two hours of high noon, neglected by all, and unapproached. The grandfather had so darkened the boy's character, that not a soul would draw near to the stone where he had been sitting quite as desolate, but not as haughty and vindictive, as the sea-eagle on his rock.

At length, as night began to fall, and the business of the day to pause, attention was again turned toward the wicked boy ; as he was watched for a long time, and not discovered to stir limb or muscle, censures of his obstinacy and dreadful temper grew louder and louder, until the whole village was fairly embarked in a swelling chorus of invective and indignation.

But when some one, more compassionate or observant than others, suggested that he might be dead of very shame and grief, or perhaps of hunger, the village was perfectly astounded, and lifting up its pious hands, cried out that he dared not do it : it would be too much for even him. The dissenter who had evoked all this clamor, by the audacity of his suggestions, now advised them to go and see, and as much as gave out, that if he—a sort of professional watcher at sick-beds in the neighborhood—knew a dead body from a live one, Tom Hubble was as ready for a shroud as any man, woman, or child at present in that village. Pricked and stimulated by the ironical observations of this gentleman, three or four formed themselves into a delegation, and waited upon poor Tom, and found him, true enough, as void of life as an assistant-preacher or an unfeud attorney ; much to their confusion and wonder. Everybody was shocked and smitten aghast with horror and amazement, and Tom Hubble's character advanced steadily in value as the wonder grew.

'How could it have happened!—at noonday, in our most public street, with a hundred eyes upon him!'

Here was wonderment sufficient for a half a dozen good-sized villages; and Gowannus made the most of it.

The village was, in truth, stunned and bewildered: and somewhat touched at heart too, notwithstanding its pragmatical conduct towards poor Tom when living. His good qualities came up freshly into many a memory; and little acts of charity—of kind consideration for poor creatures—even the little thefts and pilferings from his grandfather's store, to be bestowed on houseless, foodless wretches, pleaded in behalf of the boy's corse, and began to gather about it something of a romantic and generous interest.

Some even, now that they remembered all that he had been, and the cruel death he had died, with that red gash in his bosom, wept tears that fell upon his cold heart, and the now colder stone on which, they now first unavailingly called to mind, he had sate for hours that day, unprotected and forlorn. But who was poor Tom Hubble's murderer? Where was he—with such lightness of foot, and skill of hand, and strength of hate, as to have plunged the knife into a young boy's heart, at broad noonday, unseen—yea, even unsuspected? The news must be given to his poor old grandfather; and will it not break his heart, much cause of displeasure as he may think he should harbor against poor Tom?

Some one was despatched to the old man's house; and knocked loudly, but no answer: nor to a second, nor third knock; and the messenger, therefore, made his way into the house of himself.

The first room was empty; but in a back closet or pantry, removed from the tumult and noises of the street, he discovered the old grandfather bent over a dark chest, and plying his fingers with the utmost speed, in counting gold and silver coin, which he dropped into the chest with gloating eyes, and a jingle that seemed to make his heart jump.

Without heeding the addition to his company, the old man kept on counting with great rapidity and earnestness, and muttering to himself, until the messenger touched him upon the shoulder, and whispered in his ear that Tom Hubble was dead!

'What say you?' cried the old man staring about him, like one in a dream—'Tom Hubble, my little, darling grand-

son, Tom Hubble, dead! It can't be. You are practising on me. When did he die? Where? How?"

To these questions, the messenger could, of course, return none but vague and unsatisfactory answers; at which the old man seemed very wroth and furious; glaring upon him with wild eyes, and appearing to regard him as an idle intruder upon his privacy. Renewing the questions in a louder and more peremptory voice, and receiving the same replies, he seized the unlucky messenger, and, with little ado, thrust him forth from the house.

The messenger had scarcely returned to the group gathered about the body of Tom Hubble, when the old grandfather was descried moving down upon them with great strides; bearing in his hand an uplifted stick, and menacing them at a distance with extreme violence.

As he drew nearer, they retreated from the spot, and his eyes fell upon the corse, as it lay stretched upon the rock, with the great red gash gaping in its breast. For a moment, the old man paused and looked wildly round, and then he went and sate submissively down by the side of the corse, and took its head in his lap, as if he would call it back to life with caresses and mournful smiles. He sate in this way for more than an hour; the villagers standing back and gazing on the spectacle with wonder and pity. He then drew off his old wide-skirted coat, cast it upon the boy's dead limbs, and staggered like one blind or in a bewildering dream, back to his dwelling.

For a long time the old man's house was still and noiseless as death itself; the crowd had gathered again about the fatal spot, when he was discovered reaching forth from an upper window of his dwelling, and fastening against its walls the dead boy's carters' frock, and presently, above it, the old melancholy straw hat. He then brought forth from within, a decayed old saddle, with a pair of dangling rusty stirrups, and hung them above the window on a wooden hook; one by one he thus produced every dilapidated, mouldy, and ruinous implement that had laid rotting and mouldering in corners and closets for half a century, and fixed it against the wall, until the whole house-side was covered, like some ancient temple, with testimonies of famine, close-pinching thrift, and lean beggary. Inside out, of a truth, was the old house turned, and every one looked on, wondering where this fantasy would end. This display completed with dangling ox-

chains and rusted horse-shoes, there was a pause until the old man was again seen emerging upon the roof, shouldering an old square table, and fixing it on its centre, as for his evening meal ; presently, scant provisions followed—and having first planted a reel on another corner of the house-top, he sat down, in view of all Gowannus, to despatch his thrifty fare. Neglecting this employment, he would every now and then start up ; at one time busying himself with great industry in going through the mimicry of reeling off yarn and winding it in imaginary balls ; at another, carefully shading his eyes and looking steadily through the Narrows for a long time, as if on a search for some ship in which he had a special interest. In this way, as long as he could be seen, the old man passed from freak to freak ; and when night came on he might be discovered for a long time, stalking back and forth, like an evil spirit, through the gloom, and filling the whole region where he walked with an indescribable dread and wonder.

During all that night watchers sate by the poor boy's corse, which lay upon the rock rigid and motionless. The night-dews fell upon them thick and fast, but they watched on, knowing how sacred a charge was in their trust, and feeling how deep indeed was the mystery that brooded over the little spot on which they kept their vigils. Perfect stillness reigned everywhere, and the village was sepulchred in a deep sleep, through which passed from house to house images of deadly murder, stern hands upon feeble throats, and stealthy knives plucking at the life of innocent young bosoms. But a single light pierced the general gloom, and that moved restlessly about the dwelling of the old grandfather, sometimes showing itself at an upper window, and then glancing to and fro in the lower chambers of the house ; then it would be interrupted by a figure passing between, which cast its tall shadow gloomily over the spot on which the murdered corse was resting.

The morning brought no light to the mystery, although it wrought new changes in the fantasy of the old man, and seemed to waken in his brain whatever strange, uncouth, or raging fancies had been slumbering there during the night. The moment day dawned he put forth his head to know of the watchers whether they had seen a flock of crows pass that way ; and if they should, to ask them back to meals in his name. A moment after it was again forth, and he wished them in

the Lord's name, and as they loved him, to catch him a long-nosed weasel, and hang it on a pole at the end of his house to scare away goblins and witches. Then, after getting out at the window, and sitting in the casement with his legs dangling down for half an hour or more, he would suddenly start back, and throwing himself at full length on the floor, would lie there as if in a torpor for a long space. In the mean time the preparations for the boy's funeral proceeded, —all in the open air, for among other freaks the old man had denied it entrance, standing at his door and raising his hands with a wild look against the bearers ; but when it was laid cleanly and silently on the bier, and was ready to be borne to the grave, he rushed forth, and seizing one end of the tresses, vowed that he would carry the child to his burial.

All along the way some mad antic or other escaped him, which would seem to denote that his brain had been shattered by the poor boy's dreadful death ; none venturing to cross his wildness, withheld either by fear or reverence of his sorrowful age. At one time he would arrest the procession in mid career, and stay it till he could pluck up long blue grass and bunches of field-clover to cast upon the coffin ; and then clutching it up, he would hurry forward at such a pace as to throw the whole train into disorder and strange confusion.

When at length they had reached the grave, the old man, dropping his end of the burden with such suddenness as to nearly overturn the coffin, stepped hastily forward, and bidding the diggers stand aside, struck the spade deep in the earth, and plying it swiftly, soon finished it to its very bottom.

This done, he drew back ; and the attendants who had stood apart regarding him in wonder and surprise, approached and lowered the coffin gently to its appointed place, which was scarce accomplished, when the old man again stepped swiftly forward and cast a huge stone down into the grave ; giving them to understand that it was an anchor which would steady the coffin in the earth until judgment-day, when it would surely have its doom. The grave was speedily filled ; the turf duly levelled, and the company, saddened and amazed at all they had seen, turned away, leaving the grandfather standing hard by alone.

The last time they looked back from the highway, they discovered the old man walking rapidly to and fro along the

grave, and stamping at times with savage fury on the earth, as if he regarded the poor boy buried there as his deadliest foe !



BANCROFT'S HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES.*

THE great work of Mr. Bancroft is a criticism rather than a history. He has little skill in mere narrative, but he possesses the most philosophical spirit of any writer of history in England or this country since Hume. In some points he even surpasses Hume. Unquestionably his inferior in elegance of style, he atones for this defect by great ingenuity and boldness. He is often original in his views. He has some chapters that are independent essays in themselves, and in which he thoroughly exhausts his subject: of this kind are those on the Quakers and on Roger Williams. We will venture to say that nothing has ever been written of the Quakers, that comprises in the same space, so much liberality and acuteness. We will oppose Bancroft to old Barclay himself, or Thomas Sewall. As a specimen of his originality, in an individual instance, take his character of Sir Harry Vane, so different a man from what other historians have represented him !

As a mere narrator Bancroft is deficient. He is abrupt and dry: wants continuity and harmony. But this very abruptness is sometimes quite effective. In the relation of hurried savage warfare, a sea-fight, a sudden calamity, too terrible for the mind to dwell on a minute consideration of particulars, it comes very seasonably, to aid and heighten the general effect. In description our historian is cold and elaborate. His mind is without those soft, melting colors, that charm one in Robertson. But description is only a delightful incident in a history; it is not the main design. In portrait painting we should place Mr. Bancroft very high: on the same level with Hume, and only just below

* History of the United States, from the Discovery of the American Continent. By George Bancroft. Vol. III : 1840.

Clarendon. The present volume is full of brilliant characters.—William III., Lord Somers, Bolingbroke, Walpole, Franklin, General Oglethorpe, the Wesleys, and Whitfield. In the previous volumes there were some defects observable in a false tone of declamation. The general merits of his style are undoubted. He is close, connected, clear, with no little vigor, though without much elegance.

Mr. Bancroft is the historian for the people. Poets now-a-days write for the people, and why should not historians? He traces with a masterly hand the progress of the democratic principle—the ultimately sovereign power in the state. In his History a wise and reasonable democrat, this gentleman is said to be, in the field of actual politics, a fierce partisan, and an extravagant radical. We can scarcely credit this. True democracy is a very different thing from jacobinism, let it be defined by what political lexicographer you please. A gentleman and a philosopher may, and indeed should be, in this country, a democrat of the old stamp: but it is a discredit to a man's heart, as well as a censure to his taste, to confound himself with the herd of ignorant, hireling, pot-house, self-styled democrats. These are the very men, who, when they acquire power, or procure office, rival the czar himself in despotism and tyranny. Turbulent democracy is only the reverse of rigid autocracy,—and extremes meet. Democracy is a principle, and depends not on the dress or fortune of the man who teaches or professes it.

Historians have heretofore thought it beneath them to notice any class but the highest, or perhaps, sometimes, (with an air of condescension,) the middling class. Bancroft, more wisely, looks for the future advancement of society from the elevation of the lower classes, who are at the very basis of the civil polity. The foundation of so vast a structure ought, surely, to be firmly laid.

We have endeavored, very briefly, to convey our impressions of our ablest writer of history, and of the general character of his work. Without elaborate criticism, we will merely mention the contents of this present volume, with a few passing remarks.

The first chapter regards the absolute power of parliament. It displays an intimate acquaintance with English history at its most remarkable period. The historian here describes, with the tact of a philosophical statesman, the first

beginning of the overbearing spirit on the part of England, that gradually led to the assumption of more than her reasonable privileges, and that ended in the war of the revolution. At the same time, he reveals the spirit of independence, that thus early evinced its existence, in the freedom of speech and action which the colonists employed, and which they regarded as their natural inheritance and attributes. Certain predictions are referred to, made about this time, of the future position and standing of the then loyal provinces. These have been fulfilled to the letter! The second and third chapters present an interesting account of the French colonial system in America, during this period. The arduous and philanthropic labors of the Jesuits and other Catholic clergy, prosecuted in the midst of wild and fearful dangers; the horrid cruelties these apostles of humanity endured from some tribes; the comparative mildness and almost reverence with which they were received by others, are related in an earnest and eloquent manner. France began to find in England a dangerous rival for the possession of the coasts and fisheries, the wildernesses and woods of America. At this time, France sent many a daring adventurer, bent on further discovery. La Salle was the foremost of these, and fell a martyr to his passion for discovery. The French settled the west and southwest. Many remnants still remain of their early civilization. They have given names to almost every town and village in Illinois, Missouri, and Arkansas. Judge Hall, in his elegant tales, has largely availed himself of the picturesque traits in the mongrel life of the half French, half Indian descendants of the first settlers.

The fourth chapter contains a philosophical view of the language, manners, political institutions, religion, natural endowments, and origin of the aborigines east of the Mississippi. We know no chapter in any standard history to compare this with, unless it be Robertson's chapter of a similar description in his *History of America*. The two chapters mark the styles of the writers and distinguish the characters of the historians with such nicety, that merely for the sake of the criticism it would be worth our while to compare them. Bancroft is accurately and even profoundly philosophic, but in mere description is no more than clear and correct. Robertson is very far from being philosophical in any of his histories, but he is a rich colorist, a fine painter. De-

scription is his forte. Hume, had he written on such a subject, would have equalled Bancroft in philosophy, but fallen below Robertson in picturesqueness. He would have excelled both, as he has all the other writers of history, in the neatness, ease, and purity of his narrative style.

The next chapter returns to a relation of the old rivalry between France and England. The colonists continued to encroach on the red-man: where will he at last be driven to? The history of this epoch is a history of petty internal wars, of great local consequence, though not worth our attention in general history: a succession of Indian fights and ambuscades; of savage warfare between whites of either nation. In the English provinces the independent spirit was gaining ground; the oppression of English governors roused the indignation of the people; the minions of the crown ever appealed to that for final judgment. The loyal colonists began to cool in their devotion; constant oppression produced the natural results. Like a son, respectful and obedient, America blinded her eyes long to the vices and follies of her imported rulers and those who sent them. But, as even filial respect may be outraged by unnatural treatment, by savage cruelty, or capricious harshness, and the heart come to loath what or whom it once wished to love, if it could, so the time was rapidly approaching when America was to become free and independent. The popular will grew stronger every day, until it had become the law of the land.

The last chapter is occupied with an account of the slave trade, in the views of which the humanity of the historian is very apparent; with the first settlement of Georgia, a most interesting chapter in the history of the United States; and with the siege and capture of Louisburg, a graphic and striking relation. The volume closes with a fine allusion to Washington.

J.

LITERARY PROPERTY.

THE neglect with which the various memorials soliciting the passage of an international copyright have been treated by our National Legislature, evinces a degree of ignorance or prejudice wholly unaccountable. If in any government the framers of the laws are expected to keep pace with the wants resulting from the progress of society, they are peculiarly required to do so in a country situated like our own. With us, progress is the natural result of our institutions, and prescription, viewed as it is with no partial eye, is allowed but slightly to retard our advance. That in the old and monarchical governments of Europe, the opinions of preceding centuries should be treated with the greatest reverence and tenderness, is not to be wondered at. Artificially founded as those governments are, based upon feelings and opinions whose origin is lost in the twilight of antiquity, and deriving their stability from the faith of the people, it is not in the least surprising that they should fear the correction of even venerable abuses, lest they should remove the supports of some equally venerable, although not equally objectionable usages. Here the case is entirely different. With a recent people, with novel institutions, and with hopeful purposes, our course must be onward ; to remain the same, is forbidden to us ; we are compelled to advance ; the progress of man in arts, science, and in morals, is each day urging us forward, and our legislation should be such as to keep pace with the improvement hourly taking place around us. Every new element of power, every new application of skill, every recent advantage, calls for a new modification of the law, and it is the part of an intelligent people to meet the demand where it arises, by the enactment of just and necessary provisions.

Among the various inventions which have materially affected the power and the happiness of mankind, none will dispute with the art of printing. This art, for a considerable time applied merely to the multiplication of the scriptures and classic authors of antiquity, at first called for no immediate act of legislation. The harvest was so abundant, and the laborers so few, that each had sufficient without trenching upon the rights of his neighbor. A species of conventional courtesy and tacit understanding grew up by degrees,

which for a time answered the purposes of law, and to a considerable extent protected the author and the publisher. This limited restraint, submitted to for their mutual advantage, was, however, found, when their numbers had increased, to be utterly insufficient to restrain the unjust cupidity of the more unworthy members. The censorship of the press, originating in far different purposes, was for a while compelled to answer an object wholly unintended at its creation, the protection of the property of authors, and under its malign shelter the literary laborer was forced to seek a refuge. On the removal of this defence they found themselves wholly at the mercy of the public, and urged by their necessities, they made their first application to the legislature. This aid was invoked with various success, as the different laws of copyright prevailing throughout Europe attest. In England, (whose legislation on the subject we have followed *haud passibus aequis*) the statute of Anne was the first result of an appeal to parliament. Far better would it have been had their solicitation been unsuccessful—for this statute has proved detrimental to their interests, as well by creating a prejudice widely operating at this day, as by a limitation of rights, which, by common law, were conceded to have been far more extensive.

The prejudice just referred to, is that the claims of authors result from the arbitrary enactments of law. Depending upon the provisions of this and other statutes for *protection*, (to the very partial extent permitted them,) authors have come to be considered as having no rights founded on natural equity, or as having surrendered them for the mess of pottage they have received. The *means* used for protection have been viewed as the *basis* upon which their *title* depends. To combat this error is more difficult than one would suppose, and in its correction the ablest pens have heretofore been employed with very inadequate success. But the indications of the times, we think, evince that it is now crumbling away before the arm of truth, although the progress of its demolition is so slow as hardly to warrant any sanguine hope of its immediate removal.

It is not our present purpose to go over the argument showing the true grounds upon which the rights of literature depend. To all manly readers we trust this argument is familiar; but if not, the sources of information are so various and accessible, that the omission can be easily supplied.

We shall rather inquire into the cause of the popular indifference on this interesting subject, and suggest a few of the reasons why the public should take an interest in the matter.

The pursuits of literature are necessarily carried on in retirement and silence. The labors of the scholar are confined to the lonely library, or the still lonelier study. The mighty fabric he erects goes up in silence ; unseen by the public eye, unheard by the public ear, the workman pursues his unremitting task ; days and nights of unceasing toil are cheerfully encountered ere the result can be exhibited to the public. When so exhibited to the multitude, like the palace of Aladdin, it seems the creation of a night ! The anxious thoughts, the latent fears, and all the mental throes of the writer, are things not dreamed of ; the labor, continuous and painful labor encountered in its production, are to them as if they had never been. In explanation of the wonderful result, they may have some vague ideas of inspiration, of special powers bestowed by the Creator. The verse that moves so freely, the discourse that flows so eloquently, or the narrative that glides on so continuously, bears no impress of the toil required in its construction. But the author, and he alone, knows these deductions to be false. He knows that though genius may hallow his inspirations, without labor but little can be produced worthy of immortality. Hence the indifference that the claims of the author have to encounter. Hence the sneering epithet of book-worm applied to one whose most active life is in their eyes but inaction and indolence. Men whose labor is of the hands, have ever an unfavorable opinion of those whose pursuits are intellectual. The great mass of mankind being of this class, hence the slight interest in, if not dislike of the author, so often witnessed in the world. Another notion not less unfair, (though more complimentary,) which interferes with the pecuniary remuneration of authors, is the prevalent idea that it is unbecoming in them to attend to any thing but *Fame!* While the advocate acquires wealth and distinction at the bar, the physician from his practice, the divine from his philanthropic exertions, the author, with empty pockets, is expected to exist on the praises of the public ! How truly liberal ! how considerate ! Should he claim from some grasping bibliopole a remuneration adequate to his labor, how horrified the public ! what exclamations of *hack literary*

drudge, or ‘author by profession?’ To accept a pension from the state, or to become the tool of an unscrupulous party, is no stain on his respectability; but to claim the pecuniary reward of time and industry employed on his literary productions, to be anxious about his increased usefulness and independence, has been for too long a time imputed as a reproach to the author, and to him alone.

Another cause of the failure of authors to receive a just recompense for their services, is to be found in the policy of such European states as have passed upon the measure of protection they were to receive. He who wields a popular pen, upon whose accents hang the opinions of the public, and whose tones of dissent may ring through a nation, whatever be his birth, his station, or his means, is a man of great importance. Should he, as is happily the case at the present day, be enabled by the direct remuneration of his literary efforts to secure independence or wealth, he is likely to sympathize with the people from whom he derives his support, to be ready to protect their interests, and defend their rights. This, his independence of position enables him to do, and to this he is naturally prompted by every feeling of gratitude and patriotism. In aristocratic England, this danger was early perceived, and the decision of the House of Lords was, there is reason to think, affected by some such motive. Far better (no doubt it was thought) that the author should become the placeman, the pensioner, or the sinecurist, deriving his support from the government, than that he should receive his support from the sale of his works. In the one case he might be made the ready and convenient tool of power, in the other he was almost sure to become the advocate of the people. It argues but ill for our sagacity, that with every motive to the contrary, we have slavishly followed the precedent so illiberally set us by England.

One of the first considerations in the conduct of a people is, a scrupulous regard to the convictions of duty. With petty politicians, and in uncivilized states, expediency may be expected to prevail over justice, but the true statesman and an enlightened people feel that the public honor and happiness are inseparably blended with the performance of the right. In their enlarged code of ethics, what is just is really expedient, nor are they to be diverted from a manly and honest course by any suggestions of present advantage.

In the consideration of the present subject, as in others, we should bring to bear all those moral inducements which have, heretofore, exerted too small an influence upon our legislation in regard to Literary Property.

If by an increased remuneration of authors, the price of books should be somewhat enhanced, the public owe it to themselves to pay the advance. Shall we set an example of robbing our own citizens, and those too among the most worthy and intelligent? or, for the paltry sum to be gained by so degrading a course, outrage those ideas of honor and justice upon which the whole fabric of society depends? The extravagance and folly of such a course are too evident. We are bound to respect the rights of authors as well as the rights of readers; by so doing, we will not only consult their interests, but our own. An increase in the price of books, would induce greater care in the selection of them. Books 'made to sell,' and sold because cheap, are dearly bought at any price. By frittering away the time better employed, it interferes with a more useful application of our leisure. By vitiating our taste, they impair our relish of what is wholesome and substantial. This class of works could not bear any appreciation in their cost; any addition to their price would excite inquiry as to their value, and consequently, nine-tenths would either remain unprinted, or unsold upon the shelves of the bookseller. Works of real and enduring merit would take their place, and the buyer would have no reason to regret the change. Instead of the flood of novels, we should have well-prepared histories, ingenious speculations, and the higher efforts only of fiction.

Should the author too, be liberally rewarded for the exercise of his talents, a still larger portion of the intellect among us would be invited to the pursuit of letters. We should have a numerous and intelligent class, ever prompt at the call of truth and patriotism to defend our interests, to protect our character, to suggest political or social improvements, and to warn us of impending dangers. Advocates of their country, they would spread far and wide through our borders, more correct views of our national policy. Sentinels on the watch-towers of the republic, they would prove the most trusty guardians of our liberty and independence.

S.

THE CITY ARTICLE:—THE SCHOOL FUND.

LOOKING directly at the heart of the subject, we must frankly confess, that no question of greater moment has arisen among us than the recent application of the Roman Church for a portion of the joint School Fund of this state and city, for the use of eight Catholic schools, governed according to the creed and discipline of that religious body. The petitions for this purpose have been addressed to our city council; have been discussed and argued before them at great length; and now that the case is fully before us, the grounds of this remarkable application seem to be these:

First: a want of confidence on the part of the petitioners in the Public School Society of this city, and in their mode of conducting the business of education, in the schools in their charge.

Secondly: a desire to procure from the municipal government, an appropriation of funds for the support of schools for the education of Catholic children, who could not be conscientiously intrusted to the teaching of the common schools now in use.

The want of confidence in the School Society is enforced by charges of incompetency; treachery in the performance of their trust; ‘causing the pupils to become untractable, disobedient, and even contemptuous towards their parents—unwilling to learn any thing of religion—as if they had became illuminated, and could receive all the knowledge of religion necessary for them, by instinct or inspiration.’

A further topic under this prominent head, appears to consist in the regret of the petitioners that there is no means of ascertaining to what extent the teachers in the schools of the Society carried out the views of their principals, on the importance of conveying ‘early religious instruction,’ (which the petitioners modestly represent as heretical and infidel,) to the susceptible minds of the children. That is to say, as we understand it, the petitioners feel quite competent, in one of their accusations, to decide as to the minutest results of the instruction given in common schools: namely, that it fabricates fanatics, zealots, and little Lutheran dogmatists; and in another, immediately at its heel, and just as open to inspection, they are stone-blind and capable only of

giving utterance to a very profound inuendo. The petitioners had the good fortune to hit upon another capital topic of declamation, and we blame them for not making more of it.

It is suggested that the common school system is a dreadful thing for the children of the poor; yea, it is artfully contrived, the petitioners believe, to deprive them of the benefits of education! The poor, therefore, as the petitioners very ingenuously argue, naturally and deservedly, withdraw all confidence from it. What a gold-mine is this that we have struck upon in the very centre of Zahara, the very last place in the world where one would be looking for ingots and solid wedges of the precious metal! How this argument in behalf of the poor—the children of the poor—rings on the tongue! It has the true jingle, there can be no doubt of that, and we are surprised that Messieurs the petitioners have not displayed more activity in circulating it. Holding ourselves subject to their supreme displeasure as clippers of true coin, we must state a fact or two, as to this very remarkable withdrawal of the confidence of the poor. The whole number of children between five and sixteen, in the state of New York, in 1837, was five hundred and thirty-nine thousand seven hundred and thirty-seven; and the number instructed, five hundred and twenty-eight thousand nine hundred and thirteen; leaving a mere fraction of a fiftieth or sixtieth uninstructed throughout the whole state. Coming nearer to the question, we find that of sixteen thousand children, taught at the public schools in this city, one thousand four hundred and eighty-eight, or about one-tenth, are the children of laborers; one thousand four hundred and sixty-one, or nearly another tenth, are the children of widows; nine hundred and forty-five, shoemakers; five hundred and two, cabinet-makers; four hundred and sixteen, masons; five hundred and seventy-nine, tailors; four hundred and ninety-three, blacksmiths; while of clergymen there are but thirteen; of doctors, forty-four; lawyers, twenty-five; and sundry personages who see fit in census-tables, tax-gatherers' books, and subscription-lists, to return themselves *gentlemen*, are responsible for twenty-six. These figures convey, we trust, a quiet rebuke to the petitioners, which should not be lost on them, unless they are determined to be deaf to the despotic voice of simple addition.

We come now to the second topic: the teaching of the children of the petitioners cannot be conscientiously in-

trusted to the common schools. This charge is of the true Janus complexion: at one time it is alleged, that the common schools are infidel, utterly void of religion; at another, they are ultra-Protestant; now Janus wheedles us with the great length and demureness of his Quaker or Presbyterian physiognomy; and then he alarms and terrifies us horribly by the distortions and grimaces of his hard, unbelieving countenance. Shifting, and turning, and winding itself out of this syllogism into that; taking now one disguise, and now another, we confess we can discover in the whole of this application, nothing but a zealous, obstinate, and persevering purpose of using the public money for the furtherance of a certain class of religious tenets and the advancement, by the most strenuous agency, of the interests of an ecclesiastical corporation. It is, or appears to be, their conviction that there can be, and their determination that there shall be no schools without distinct religious beliefs: without their creed, their paternoster, their surplice, and their basins of holy water.

There is a class of people, we are aware, to whose imaginations Man can never present himself without his prayer-book, his collection of psalms, and his Sunday hat. It is impossible for them, by an unfortunate law of their nature, to contemplate him in any other than his strictly religious and pew-holding character. This, it seems to us, is narrow and unjust. There is a world outside of the walls of the sanctuary. There are many acts into which religion does not, cannot enter. There can be no doctrinal truth in the structure of a clock, though it may moralize as wisely as the best homilist of them all; and but a slight portion of evangelical spirit in a pair of honest household bellows, for instance, although its lungs may blow as round a blast as any divine in the land. There is no such thing known among the plain, homely people of every-day life as Catholic carpenters, or Presbyterian bottlers of beer, or Swedenborgian makers of wind-mills. One of Dr. Nott's stoves would dispense, we imagine, no more heat to an heretical Romanist, fire-deserving though his sins might be, than to a sturdy and conscientious Congregationalist of the true, orthodox complexion; nor do we think Professor Olmsted's patent would exhibit a greater alacrity in consuming a dissenting Baptist, than a full conforming Churchman.

It is the purpose of the common schools to create citizens and not Christians. Citizen is a lower degree, it may be, in the same school with Christian; and out of the wise and just performance of social duty—of obligation to men in communities—may spring, in due season, the higher order of sacred, Christian character. The Christian includes the citizen: But who is it that tells us, because this child, this little creature of the public goodness, cannot be born with the vision of an angel, he shall not be allowed to see at all; that unless his little eyes are made to look direct down the optical glasses of this orthodoxy or that orthodoxy, he shall lie in the cradle of a helpless and idle imbecility all his life?

In this great question, the Community—embodying itself in all its majesty and collected force—has a voice above all sects, all dominations, powers, and principalities. It demands for itself life—without discord; it pleads for peace, free from controversies and schisms—that the great heart may be calm and serene, whence issue the social currents by which its children are nurtured and sustained.

It is not pretended—there is no charge against the school society—as Mr. Hiram Ketchum suggests—that it has not performed the duty of furnishing a good, common, ordinary literary education—that it has not given what it was bound to give—that it has not enabled the children to read, and write, and cypher. The petitioners demand more. Their ambition is not to be squared and measured by the ambition, humble and just though it be, of the other free citizens of this state. They clamor for higher nutriment: they stand on tip-toe, above all their other fellow-citizens, aspiring to catch glimpses of a celestial sapience denied to the vision of the little scholars and the adult trustees of the public school. Yea, it would appear from one view of this subject, as we have already suggested, that the petitioners desire to have their peculiar religious tenets taught and disseminated at the public cost; that they claim the peculiar, and, in this country, extraordinary privilege, of dipping into the state treasury for the support and furtherance of an ecclesiastical establishment. They knew that the constitution of the land, the spirit of free institutions, stood between them and their object: and yet they push forward with all the vehemence of clamorous memorials, popular excitements, and public meetings toward its attainment. Why, then, this urgency of petitions? They must have sought, it seems to

us, one of two results. Either, first, the success of their application, from the show of numbers by which it was countenanced, in the very face of all constitutional objections ; or, secondly, the disruption of the entire school system, not only here, but throughout the state, by means of a plausible outcry against its actual or assumed abuses. No false motive may have mingled in the attempts by which these results were to be accomplished. The petitioners may have been sincere, honest, patriotic. That we leave with God and their own secret thoughts. For the wilful violator of our constitution and established liberties, there is but one answer, and that is to be had in the field ; but we pity, with the regard of a steady and sincere commiseration, the man or set of men who would in sober reason attempt, by any means, or under any assumption whatever, to disband the five hundred and forty thousand youth of this state, who receive instruction at the public schools : who could look calmly on, while the heat of an intolerant zeal was dissolving the bands that knit them together into one large, innocent, and growing company ; and could see them turning sorrowfully away from the old district school-house, where some hope, some little ambition, had begun to dawn upon their minds, back to the squalid hut, or the cheap farmhouse, or the dark alley, from which all such hope, all such ambition must be henceforth excluded forever !

We hear much of conscientious scruples in this discussion. To what purpose has conscience just now become nice and scrupulous ? What portentous shape hath the goblin taken just at this time to shake its delicate fibres ? Reading, writing, and the use of globes ! The little mimic ball that humbly represents our planet, swarms with direful hieroglyphics ; the twenty-six letters have formed themselves into a terrible regiment of black dragoons ; and the unpretending, common school-slate is one of the devil's cards in this profound game that is played, to ensnare consciences and entrap the feet of the unwary. We cannot say that we feel an extraordinary respect for any man, whose conscientious scruples are found travelling on this road ; we are rather inclined to commend him to a dark lantern and the crutch of an octogenarian. Daylight and a swift pace, that keeps abreast of social rights, are no pleasures of his.

Conscience, sitting serenely in the breast of man, sagacious

and austere, and lifting her terrible front against whatever debases, obscures, or mars the soul, inherits a noble realm of duty, from which she cannot be drawn to do task-work for hire, or favor, or the furtherance of a doubtful cause. She inspires scruples that speak out, in very audible tones, against the oppression of tyrants, the crafts of priests, the violences of wicked men, and not against the rights and immunities of humble children, pensioners on our bounty and justice for a few words of healthful knowledge. Doth conscience stand in the portal, rebuking common schools? What is there in all their wise and plain operations at which she can be justly affronted? The common school recognises a God, a conscience, and Saviour: a Being that holds the ends of the wide universe together; a tribunal that arraigns the crimes and vices of men; and a Mediator, pleading and interceding between the two. A Creator and a judicial Spirit within us, all men will admit; and if any say they cannot take cognizance of the Great Head of the Christian Church, to them we make answer, in a merely secular view of the case, that it is through the imagination the heart is purified; and whenever they can present to our contemplation a nobler, lovelier image, and one more likely to arrest the regards of a wise and pure soul, we will, if the sternness of their exactions so require, have our Saviour depart from the consecrated school-room, and hail with joy and earnest acclamation the advent of the glorious Substitute.

We are not the apologists of the system of common schools. We are not even advised that it needs apologists or advocates. If it has errors and defects, let them be amended and removed; but unless objections to it more manly, and cogent, and more consonant to what has been considered the spirit of American institutions, than those urged by the petitioners in this ill-advised and unwarranted application can be advanced, we say, let it stand, grounded as the pyramids. Let it spread its wide base until it embraces the utmost verge of society; let its foundations be struck deeper and deeper, until they shall be known to rest on the great heart of the community; and let its turrets and its summoning towers ascend until they are lost in a tranquil sky, objects of steady admiration, exciting hope, and cheerful regard to all people that lie in their shadow, and within sound of the tuneful voices that echo from its walls!



THE FINE ARTS.

LECTURES.

WITHIN the last month Mr. Bancroft, the historian, has delivered a lecture in the Lyceum course at the Tabernacle, where, though the night was very inclement, the literary reputation of the lecturer drew together one of the largest and best selected audiences of the season. He chose for his subject ‘the idea of a Universal History,’ which he taught to consist in the progress in welfare of the race, not of the individual. The unity of history was the particular government of God, in the increasing well-being of the world, in the development of truth and good order. Mr. Bancroft supported this view with great boldness and felicity, by illustrations drawn from history and general observation. The lecture was rather a series of brilliant points than a careful defence of a disputed dogma against difficulties. It was spoken *ex tempore*, rapidly, and with great energy of manner, at times falling into declamation. It might have conveyed less matter, more argument, and carried a stronger conviction; but it was the copious talk of a man full of his subject, and who speaks from the heart.

At the Mercantile Library Association at Clinton Hall, Mr. Isaac S. Hone has delivered two lectures on the literature of the age of Elizabeth. We speak only of the second, which was devoted to the poets and dramatists of that period. It was a catalogue of the chief authors and their works, illustrated by frequent quotations, selected with taste, and read with a good gentlemanly appreciation of their merits. We could have wished, however, that the discourse had smelt more of the lamp. It was the work of a general reader, not of a close philosophical student of literature, else Mr. Hone could not have spoken so slightingly of Ben Jonson. He quoted a passage from Sejanus for its lofty elevation, and called to mind the lyrics, but complained of the comedies as destitute of interest, not expressing man as he is, and the characters bearing no resemblance to any of our acquaintance! This was cavalier treatment of

The Fox, the Alchymist, and Silent Woman,
Done by Ben Jonson, and outdone by no man.

Perhaps the comedies of Jonson are appreciated only by scholars ; certainly they have not the same universal application as those of Shakspeare, but there is a vast solidity of nature in them for all that. Mr. Hone spoke well of the ‘Fairy Queen,’ as breathing throughout the purest ideal of a fine-souled gentleman. Of Shakespeare, he said he was sadly obliged to think, from the thirty-seventh and eighty-ninth sonnets, that he was afflicted through life with ‘a chronic lameness.’ As a whole, the lecture was wanting in unity, and of course, in interest—there were no connecting principles to bind the scattered materials together, no application of the matter to the literature of to-day.

Mr. Hone was succeeded at the Mercantile Library Association by Theodore Sedgwick, in a lecture upon the age of Louis XIV. It was a narrative historical review of the events of the reign, of the wars of Louvois, and the internal administration of Colbert. The style was brief, pure, and energetic. It resembled a single chapter taken from an historical work, but it was a chapter of remarkable variety and character. The statesmen and generals of the period were brought to life before the audience, and Louis himself restored to his old privileges of the *Grand Monarque*. The fashion of robbing Louis of his glory, by referring the great acts of his reign to adventitious circumstances, the lecturer said was unjust ; he would have been great had he not been king, for he had the superiority to command others, and the ability to retain authority. The immorality of war, the crime of religious persecution, the inferiority of the court in social morals, were points dwelt upon by Mr. Sedgwick with dignity and force. In the internal reforms of Colbert he found a congenial topic for his pen, and the arts of peace were ably defended. The lecture was a calm, lofty review of the great facts of French history in the lifetime of Louis XIV.

The Mechanics Society in Crosby Street, have a very neat and well-attended lecture-room, one of the most convenient in the city, where lectures are delivered throughout the winter. We were present to hear Mr. W. A. Jones on ‘the Study of Ethics.’ It was the first appearance of this gentleman among the unlicensed priesthood of the lecturers, and we thought his theme well chosen for an introductory one. He is certainly entitled, as an able thinker, to become a teacher of men—for so we may define the true lecturer. The address was a full, exact, well-proportioned view of the subject. The selection of the topic implied some faith in the audience, who on their part gave the strictest attention. Throughout, the thought was just and elevated, the sentiment humane, and the manner and matter of a scholar-like cast.

MR. BUCKSTONE.

The New Stage has, in the place of the old race of classical, smooth, finished actors, a generation of restless, nervous, and angular performers, whose success lies in point, brilliancy, and celerity. They take possession of the boards by a rapid onset, and occupy the attention of the audience in a series of dexterous and agile *coups de main*. It is not permitted to fat men to shine in this walk of the drama; fourteen-stone cannot be hurried about the stage at this rate. Lame men, tall men, muscular men—men that live on plum-pudding and surloin—are all debarred by an unfortunate physical conformation from success in this sphere of acting. To small, round, oily, sleek-faced little gentlemen, of a nervous temperament and uncommon swiftness of foot, the laurels of this lesser comedy, as of right, belong. Of these, Buckstone is the prince, by a double tenure. He writes rapid, bustling, locomotive farces, and putting himself into one of them, gets under a headway that could scarcely be checked by the voice of any manager, or the serpentine disapproval of any audience.

Mr. Buckstone is the most successful farce-writer of the day; and this includes his highest praise, as well as matter of ‘wisest censure.’

His compositions are so prepared as to bring into use all the properties of the theatre, and to keep the whole force of the stock-company in a perpetual whirl while the curtain is up. In the pauses of the dialogue—which consists of a few explanatory paragraphs, with a smart quip, now and then interspersed—nothing is heard but the prompter’s whistle giving notice of a change of scene and the entrance of a new set of *dramatis personæ*. In one of these farces, (the *Lottery Ticket*,) if we recollect aright, the chief force of the leading performer is expended in jumping in and out at a counting-house window on a ground-floor. This is the drama of action and incident; and in this, Mr. Buckstone bears the palm, we imagine, from all rivals.

His merits—for merits he certainly has—we have no desire to disparage; on the contrary, from what we know of the man, it affords us pleasure to do him liberal justice. He does not claim for his writings—he has too much shrewdness and good sense for this—a front rank in dramatic literature; he cannot suppose that they are entitled to form the staple of the entertainment of this community, nor of any great and enlightened community, of playgoers. As opening and after-pieces, they possess great merit, and merit of the right sort too; relieving the mind from the continuous attention required by an elaborate dramatic work, or

rousing it in the early part of the evening, by its bustling haste and rapid movements, to a state of cheerful activity.

As a performer, Mr. Buckstone embodies the leading notion of his writings : he does more than he says. His motions are more of the body than the mind. His acting is full of jerks and diagonal slides over the stage. His eye (and where is there a more roguish one to be found ?) twinkles more than his tongue utters.

In a word, Buckstone is a capital whet to the appetite, and an excellent after-thought ; but there is scarcely substance enough in his plays or in his performances, to serve for a full meal, unless we can banquet on merry smiles and grotesque motions of the leg. It has not been our fortune to see him in any sustained part of considerable length ; and we have some curiosity, we confess, to know whether his snug-built, little physique could acquire sufficient momentum to carry him successfully through a five act comedy.



COLE'S PICTURES OF THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

MR. COLE has opened an exhibition in one of the upper rooms of the Society Library Building, of four paintings illustrating the periods of Childhood, Youth, Manhood, and Old Age. The machinery employed for the purpose is the old allegory of a river in the different parts of its course : at first issuing to the day from a dark cave, smiling amidst fertile landscapes, perilous in floods and waterfalls, at last calm and tranquil in the bosom of the great ocean. These severally are types of the four stages of life. If the artist had ended here, with his success as a painter of natural scenery, and left these different scenes to represent in their mute grandeur by a silent admonition the 'Voyage of Life,' he would have relied more justly upon the imagination. As it is, he has introduced a fanciful bark on the river with the presence of an angel (a very substantial, matter-of-fact, angel) guiding or admonishing the youth and man : which withdraws the subject from the imagination and substitutes a literal commonplace. If for the illustration of manhood the painter had represented a stern, secluded, warlike castle on the banks of the river, as an image of the proud energy of life, or in some way tasked the mind to an original effort, we cannot but think the moral would have been more successful and the painter attained a higher standard of art.



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THE LOITERER.

Emancipation. By WILLIAM E. CHANNING. Boston: E. P. Peabody: 1840.

The title pages of Channing's tracts are always characteristic of the man and his style of thought. A general subject as War, Temperance, Slavery, is proposed simply by itself, disconnected with any temporary associations or accidents of place that might limit its bearing, and argued simply, clearly, and forcibly on its own merits, according to the measure of truth and justice in every time and country. Channing pushes at once to the centre of his subject like a man who has business at the court of truth and is not to be thrust aside by guards or courtiers. He has the ear of this royal mistress and speaks from her side as with the voice of an oracle. Nothing can turn him away from 'the direct forth-right.' The secret of his success is great singleness of purpose. That which gave glory to Howard, an invincible will devoted with all the powers of the soul to one object, has made Channing the foremost prophet in the cause of human improvement. We have heard it said that Channing reads no book or talks of nothing which does not refer directly to some great topic of morals or religion. This is the work he has to do, and he does it with the strength of an apostle. Whatever he writes is entitled to a patient study for it is by measuring our aims by the standard of such a man that we grow wiser and better. But the very strength of Channing as a theorist unfits him for the practical part of life. He does not mingle with the men of the world as a leader fighting with them each day's battle and stooping with patience and humility to the least advantage in the slow progress of events but sits calmly in his study waiting for the world to come up to him. Hence his thoughts have an entireness, a force and simplicity of greatness because they are disengaged of all the petty details of active and common life—he has but to guide the pen with a steady hand, and lo! war is the height of folly, slavery the very plague spot of the earth, labor becomes honorable and the day-laborer a man of taste and skill in the arts. These are great ends that we have hope enough in a good providence to think will be finally attained in the world and we are indebted to Channing for stating them with such force but there are many men who say nothing of these things, who perhaps are apparently acting against them and who yet by the honest discharge of duty working as they can, are no less philanthropists. Because Channing is right it does not follow that the rest of the world is wrong; or that his

life is immeasurably in advance of theirs. He would be the last man to claim this for himself.

A new volume from the pen of this author has just found its way to our desk. The title 'Emancipation' relates to the freedom of the English West India Islands and not to any immediate action of that nature in our own country. The book is a review of Gurney's Tour in the West Indies, lately published, from which it appears that although exports are falling off in the islands, as might have been expected, the condition of the free blacks themselves is one of great social improvement. Inferior to the white race in intellect and progress, their capacities are suited to a moderate tropical civilization. At home, Channing advocates individual opinion as opposed to the influence of 'societies,' and thinks the most harm that could happen to the cause of emancipation would be its union with party politics. He says the slave states are foreign states, with whom we have no right to intermeddle through the general government: that strictly abstaining from any interference with them as such foreign states, the north has its own right to be independent, and ought not to be obliged to give any aid to the slave owner in the recovery of the fugitive. This is all fair in theory, but inexpedient in practice, for if the old English doctrine were to be applied, that the moment a slave set his foot on northern ground he should be free, the residence of southern families here would be prohibited, and thus the force of example and personal arguments would be lost; besides, a general emigration of the southern slaves might be immediately expected across the border, which would subject northern philanthropy to a pleasant burden of defence and alms-giving, not provided for by the eloquence of abolition agents. As a whole, the fairness of this book entitles it to the attention of every man of intelligence. We cannot but hope the season for calm discussion and good feeling on this subject has arrived, and that the topic will be held in future 'an open question' to all—as it stood before the late noisy and ill-judged excitement, now happily passed away.



Grandfather's Chair: a History for Youth. By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, author of *Twice Told Tales*. Boston: E. P. Peabody. New York: Wiley & Putnam. 1840.

The best test of a sentimental author is the production of a good book for children. If he can write so as to engage the hearts of both young and old, he must have a portion of the poet's youthful soul, which grows no older while the furrows on the brow deepen, or the world without presses with its cares. The instinct of child-

hood is a rare judge of temperament. Where its faith is given, there must be honesty and love in the receiver. No pedant in morals or learning can gain its ear, so readily attentive to the accents of truth and simplicity. The lovers of Mr. Hawthorne's former writings will find full warrant for their sympathy, in the child's love of Grandfather's Chair. Those who remember the sketch of Little Annie's Ramble, in the Twice Told Tales, will need no introduction to the present volume.

It is in the same true-hearted sympathy with children, that Grandfather's Chair is written. It is a gathering of the local traditions and personages of the New England history, about an old chair which is supposed to have been in the possession of various illustrious occupants. At different times are seen in the chair 'the lovely lady Arbella Johnson, who faded away like a pale English flower in the shadow of the forest; Roger Williams, in his cloak and band, earnest, energetic, and benevolent; then the figure of Anne Hutchinson, with the like gesture as when she presided at the assemblages of women; then the dark, intellectual face of Vane, 'young in years, but in sage counsel, old'; the governors Winthrop and Endicott, while it was a chair of state; the half-frenzied shape of Mary Dyer, the persecuted Quaker woman; the purple and golden magnificence of Sir William Phips.' The story of Eliot's 'Indian Bible,' is beautifully told, with choice incidents. 'Then would the Indian boy cast his eyes over the mysterious page, and read it so skilfully, that it sounded like wild music. It seemed as if the forest leaves were singing in the ears of his auditors, and as if the roar of distant streams were poured through the young Indian's voice. Such were the sounds amid which the language of the red man had been formed; and they were still heard to echo in it.' We might go on and quote the whole volume with pleasure, for never can there be better words on our page than those of Nathaniel Hawthorne!



On Beggary. A sermon by the Rev. ORVILLE DEWEY. The New World, 4to. Dec. 5, 1840. J. Winchester. New York.*

On all questions of city life Mr. Dewey is always shrewd, practical, and (what shrewd and practical men are not always,) full of honest sympathy with his subject. Beggars have been a

* As we shall endeavor to make this portion of our paper of especial interest to the reader, by including as many notices as possible of the best kind of writing, and making it a bulletin of the fairest compositions of the day,

long time before the world, yet we do not know any author who has given the philosophy of the craft with the same insight. He says :

It is a thing which we do not sufficiently consider or understand—the different and diverse spheres in which men move, even when they are mingled in the same crowd; how it is that, in some respects, every man is a world to himself, into whose inmost depths, perhaps, no other man can enter; how the feeling of severance may separate different beings and classes who walk on the same earth, almost as widely as if they dwelt in different planets. As you brush by the street-beggar you recognise the form of a man, and think, perhaps, of nothing more. But what is his position? He sustains but one relation to the mass of men, and that is the relation of abject dependence. Is it strange, then, that he should look upon them with secret hate and despite, and all the more, because he cringes before them? Is it strange then he should think it his business to deceive them as much as ever he can? He wrings, perhaps, a reluctant gift from the hand of charity. Is it likely to fall kindly on his nature? Is not his very success more likely to be recounted to his comrades at night as a good story, for their amusement, and for their common mockery at the credulous and tender-hearted people that have helped him? If different nations can be brought into a state of angry warfare without any cause, or without their knowing any good cause—without any real contrariety of interests—do you suppose that the nation of beggars carries on no war with the nation of givers? Indeed it does carry on that warfare; and with the most exquisite tact and skill—with the most astonishing knowledge of human nature. The eye that looks out from the beggar's shaggy locks and ragged attire, is, amidst all its downcast submissiveness, sharpened to the keenest observation. Thus—as I have observed—if he meets with an angry rebuff from any man, it is upon that man he is sure to fasten himself. He calculates upon that sensitiveness—that quickness of feeling—he expects that it will come round to his aid. But if he sees that the man passes him with cold and almost unnoticed indifference, he knows that the case is hopeless.

and knowing there are very many good things in the periodicals that often lie there neglected for want of the journalist's note of admiration, we have determined to open a new department of miscellaneous criticism—the notice of contributions to newspapers and magazines, articles in reviews and the annuals, where they shall appear of sufficient merit in themselves, or indicate any thing noteworthy in the progress of literature. Most of the authors of the day have commenced their career in periodicals. The basis of a reputation is generally laid in the pages of some country or city journal. This is a cheap, safe mode for a young writer, who may thus travel up to fame from some small dusty-brown gazette in the Alleghanies, to the metropolitan magazine or review, and finally emerge upon the public in the concentrated glory of a book. Now, we do not propose to wait till a writer's fame is thus fairly established by the book publishers, and all eyes are gazing upon the author, but shall sometimes meet him halfway, and give the public a kindly intimation of what is in store for them. Intermixed then, with other notices, will occasionally appear the name of a single newspaper at the head of an article.

There are exceptions, doubtless : but generally speaking, beggary deserves to be regarded as an awful moral fact ! It is pregnant with meaning. The outer garments are stamped with more, and alas ! far other, than heraldic insignia. Idleness, improvidence, and ruin, are written upon every fluttering shred of its ‘looped and windowed raggedness.’ The victim at the *auto da fe* did not more certainly wear the garment of doom.

For the remedy, Mr. Dewey advocates the *social* exertions of the rich and charitable, not in mercenary contributions, but in acts of kindness and moral influence, as from man to man : by words of encouragement ; by the revival of hope and resolution in broken down families : by remembering that we are linked to the poor man in the world as a brother. If the wealthy were rich only in money, riches would not be so desirable : it is the leisure, the educated good sense, the foresight and knowledge that accompany honest wealth, that make it so great an object : of these the rich man should give to the poor, and not only of the poorest thing he has about him, his silver and pence.



Finden's Tableaux for 1841 : London.

We mention this annual for the sake of quoting a few verses from its contents. It has a poem by George Darley, (the recent editor of Beaumont and Fletcher's works, and author of a tragedy on the subject of Thomas-a-Becket,) entitled ‘Harvest Home.’ It is essentially in the vein of the old poets, in the directness of the words, the quick bright expression (conveying something of the poet's eye to the page) and the liquid flow of the measure. What poetical nicety of language could express more of prettiness and affection than the fourth line that follows ? Fancy will readily supply the picture of a rich English meadow and low cottages in the background, while youth tumbles joyously on the scene.

Down the dimpled green-sward dancing
Bursts a flaxen headed bevy,
Bud-lipt boys and girls advancing,
Love's irregular little levy.

Rows of liquid eyes in laughter,
How they glimmer, how they quiver !
Sparkling one another after,
Like bright ripples on a river.

Tipsy band of rubious faces,
Flushed with joy's ethereal spirit,
Make your mocks and sly grimaces
At Love's self, and do not fear it. ;

And this picture, for it is as distinct as a painting, of ‘the Village Blacksmith’—

Here he, your law, vociferous wits !
 Strong Son of the Sounding Anvil, sits ;
Black and sharp his eyebrow edge,
His hand smites heavily as his sledge—
At will he kindles bright discourse,
Or blows it out, with blustrous force ;
The fiery talk, with dominant clamor,
Moulds as hot metal with his hammer.
 Yet this swart, sinewy boisterer,
 His wife and babe sit smiling near,
 All-fairness with all-feebleness in her arms,
 Safe in their innocence and their charms.



The Heart's Ease ; or a remedy against all troubles : with a consolatory discourse particularly directed to those who have lost their friends and dear relations. By SYMON PATRICK, D. D. New York : D. Appleton & Co. 1841.

A sound amiable morality centred in true Christian piety seems the characteristic of this volume. The preface is dated 1659, an era in sacred literature of the English Church, whence we may draw deep lessons in religion and humanity for these qualities were then often found together. Whether the lapse of time imparts a mellowness to old books as old wine is improved by age, and the words of a teacher fall softer on the ear from the distance of the past, or we have more patience with the lessons of the dead, or more respect for ancestry than for our contemporaries ; but of two books of sacred morality, of equal merit, of the nineteenth or the seventeenth century, we would prefer the latter. The aim of Bishop Patrick’s volume is expressed in its title, ‘The Heart’s Ease.’ Well does he say, ‘It is not either fineness of wit, or abundance of wealth, or any such like inward or outward ornament, that makes the difference between men, and renders the one better than the other ; but the firmness of good principles, the settledness of the spirit, and the quiet of the mind * * * *. Peace is the proper result of the Christian temper. It is the great kindness which our religion doeth us, that it brings us to a settledness of mind and a consistency within ourselves.’

The mechanical dress of the work is admirable in the best and clearest style of print. A neat fashionable border encloses the page, with the luxury of the old head and tail-pieces of cherubs, classical busts, gothic scrolls and other fine wood engravings. The reprints of old literature, by Mr. Appleton, of which this is the leader, are to be commended heartily.



NOTE TO THE TALE OF THE FIELD DEATH.—The metaphysical truth upon which this story must depend for its consistency, is the working of a mean passion in the vacant mind of extreme old age. A barren period, alas ! to very many, and filled, in the best, with weaknesses, meannesses, and many petty acts which the heyday of youth passes by with contempt, though the seeds of them already were cast in the soul. In the exclusion of every humane influence, the control of society was lost to the old man ; his spite was vented on the boy, till in some moment of excess, such as the long dwelling on that one passion, the last refuge of age might engender, he committed the act portrayed in the story. The remainder of the tale is an attempt at filling up the conduct, such an old man in his cunning might pursue. Man is never too old to be cunning ; the good, the noble sentiments are lent to man for the benefit of society, to be used in the active season of manhood, and withdrawn when activity has passed away. Often-times the ill weeds only are found growing at the deserted cistern of life.



NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Report of the Committee on Arts and Sciences and Schools, of the Board of Assistants, on the subject of appropriating a portion of the School Money to Religious Societies for the support of Schools. April 27, 1840.

Reply of the Trustees of the Public School Society, to the Address of the Roman Catholics. August 27, 1840.

Documents XIX. XX. XXI. of the Board of Aldermen. Sept. 21, 1840. Oct. 19, 1840.

Debate before the Common Council on the Catholic Petition respecting the Common School Fund, and the Public School System of Education in the City of New York ; with the arguments of counsel, before the Board of Aldermen of the City of New York, on Thursday and Friday the 29th and 30th of Oct., 1840 ; specially reported by R. Sutton, professional shorthand writer.

Catholic Claims.—Review of the Proceedings of the Catholics, on their application for a division of the School Fund. By a Citizen. Printed and published at No. 17 Ann Street, 1840.

Discourses on the Objects and Uses of Science and Literature, by Henry Lord Brougham, Prof. Sedgwick, and the Hon G. C. Verplanck ; with Preliminary Observations, &c., on Reading, by A. Potter, DD., Professor of Moral Philosophy in Union College. New York : Harper & Brothers, 1840. 18mo. pp. 332.

An eminently practical volume of the School District Library, full of suggestions and motives of encouragement in the pursuit of learning.

Sacred Melodies, or Hymns for Youth ; with appropriate selections from Scripture. New York : Wiley & Putnam. 1841. 12mo. pp. 111.

Methodist Quarterly Review, for January, 1841. Edited by George Peck, D.D. New York : George Lane, Publisher.

The January number of this Review is the first of a new and improved series. Its typographical appearance is very good, and several of its articles are written with decided ability. The large and influential denomination, under whose auspices this Review is issued, has long needed a high-toned Critical Journal, as the exponent of its doctrines and sympathies. We think that this periodical cannot fail to take a fair rank among its critical contemporaries.

Elizabeth, and her three beggar boys, by Mrs. Hofland. 18mo. pp. 144.

The History of a Clergyman's Widow, and her Young Family, by Mrs. Hofland. 18mo. pp. 180. 1841.

Farewell Tales, founded on facts, by Mrs. Hofland. 18mo. pp. 228. New York : Charles G. Dean, 2 Ann Street. 1841.

We may safely say of these volumes, from the impressions made upon us, in former times by the authoress, that they are among the best books for the youthful library of the season. The last-mentioned is now reprinted for the first time. The moral, sentiment, and interest of Mrs. Hofland's story always run together: her books are full of excitement, but it is of the healthiest kind.

The Laws of Trade in the United States, being an abstract of the Statutes of the several states and territories concerning debtors and creditors, by J. B. Moore. New York : A. V. Blake, 1840. 12mo. pp. 360.

Sowing and Reaping; or, What will Come of it. By Mary Howitt. New York : D. Appleton & Co. 1841. 18mo. pp. 170.

Constance, or the Merchant's Daughter. A Tale of Our Times. New York : Gould, Newman & Saxton. Boston : Ives & Dennet, 1841.

This is a good book; written in an excellent spirit, and by a man of sense and talent.

Agathos, and other Sunday Stories, by Saml. Wilberforce, M. A., Archdeacon of Surry. From the second London edition. New York : Gen. Prot. Epis. Sunday School Union, 28 Ann Street, 1840.

The Holy Child of Nazareth, by the Rt. Rev. Geo. W. Doane, D.D., Bishop of New Jersey. New York : Published by the Gen. Protestant Epis. S. S. Union, 1841.

A neatly executed series of juvenile publications.

Sketches and Stories for Young Children, Nos. I., II., III., IV. Published as above.

The History of England, from the earliest period to 1839, by Thomas Keightley. In 5 vols. 18mo. Harper's Family Library.

Stories for Young Persons, by the author of the 'Linwoods.' New York : Harper & Brothers. 18mo. pp. 185.

A new book, prepared by Miss Sedgwick since her return from Europe, and full of her bright-eyed, benevolent views. Did we not hope soon to speak of Miss Sedgwick in another department of our journal, we could here enumerate her high qualities. It may be enough to say, she never omits any of them in writing for children.

The Biographical Annual for 1841; edited by Rufus W. Griswold. New York : Linen & Fennell.